



# CHRISTIANITY TODAY

PUBLISHED FORTNIGHTLY

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World Government and Christianity

**H. H. LIPPINCOTT**

Abraham Lincoln's Faith

**RAYMOND W. SETTLE**

Death: Yesterday and Today

**S. BARTON BABBAGE**

When We Face the Dying

**A SYMPOSIUM**

The World's Most Crowded Freeway

**C. RALSTON SMITH**

EDITORIAL:

The Paganizing of Love



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# World Government and Christianity

H. H. LIPPINCOTT

The cry for "World Government" represents, I think, something like cosmic anxiety about the future. People are frightened. They ponder the prodigious problems and long for the magic of *simple solutions*. Have we, at long last, come to that hour in history which so many prophets of older days envisioned as an invitation for "The Coming Caesars"?

History is connected stuff. Happenings are related reactions. The dictatorships of the Stalins, the Mussolinies, the Hitlers and others arrive not by accident, but because a deep force is at work in the central flow of things. When Goering told the German people the need was desperate for "more guns and less butter," Western civilization screamed its denunciation of "gutter ethics." The strange influences have deepened their control. In Christian America last November a top government official told the nation the need is now for "less butter and more guns." The trend is not trivial.

We now wonder at rather than criticize Spengler's idea that this is "the age of world wars" and that "Caesarism" is setting armies, not parties, to be the future form of power. In the World Government dream it is significant to note how the emphasis everywhere falls upon "an instrument of overwhelming military force."

Utilizing the central weaknesses of democracy, dictatorships have gotten miracles out of pelting the mass mind with senseless hopes. Incited individualism, uninhibited and ruthless, generates profound troubles. The result is that sick democracies troop to strange doctors. These medicine men with gifted cliches and fascinating nomenclature offer blueprints for every contingency. But the stabilities of civilization disintegrate until terrified and bewildered people literally beg for "controls" that will be strong and ruthless enough" to shoot mankind's way to peace. World Government

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with matchless power thus offers fabulous hopes. In the background one can almost hear the ghost of Tacitus repeating the old lines: "In peace representative government, in war generals, in peril dictators!"

## DISINTEGRATING DEMOCRACIES

Whether we like it or not, the whip of despotism cracks like rifle fire in the modern world. These despotisms are the frightening forces that today are making all of earth's millions dance to their tunes. The principles of democracy seem like fading fires. Leaders, not people, are glamorized. "Spain is Franco and Franco is Spain." "Peron is the Republic." Churchmen and politicians hailed Mussolini as "the man sent by Providence." Said Hess to the German people: "Hitler is what the soul of the country is." Echoes in America spin up wonders. Writers in recent years speak not of democratic presidents but of "strong presidents."

At this moment, military force is accepted as the only hopeful arbiter of humanity's fate, a situation where the tendency usually gravitates into single-minded control. The spell of things calls for a saving greatness that they cannot themselves produce. The tensions now tightening to an explosive point all over the world may answer themselves with a Caesar, or a Cromwell, or a Napoleon, or some one worse. In history the dangerous man is always waiting to exploit the social, political and religious tensions of difficult times.

If democracy softens up and loses its wondrous strength, designing despotism will systematically destroy its foundations. That is why wisdom must hold the ascendancy of physical force to be suspect, even if it is lighted with the glow of that idealism which characterizes the dream of World Government. Power over other people is loaded dynamite. The more so when it pinnacles into enormities for ruling the globe. We cannot submit to "the great political superstition," namely, the divine right of parliaments to absolute authority over the people.

In the budding years of this century only a few men saw with far vision the beginning of influences that could bring human storms.

No one in his good senses entirely dismisses the possibilities of those prophecies now.

An article in *Harper's Magazine* (1902) extended the possible trajectories of those developing forces and said some amazing things about "the evil days to come" and about "hours of defeat." "There will," said the prophecy, "arise *The Man*. He will be strong in action, epigrammatic in manner, personally handsome and continuously victorious. He will sweep aside parliaments and demagogues, carry civilization to glory, reconstruct it as an empire, and hold it together by circulating his profile and organizing further successes. He will codify everything, rejuvenate the papacy or, at any rate, galvanize Christianity. He will organize learning into meek academies of little men and proscribe a wonderful educational system. And the grateful nations will deify a lucky and aggressive egotism."

#### WORLD GOVERNMENT

Contemplate the proposed World Government and the eventualities if an evil fate should give it wrong-way directions! Prevailing psychologies sag with desperate dangers. The "mass man" is here and the masses are on their way up. Society may have to develop a genius it has never shown before if it is to withstand demagogues promising paradise to earth's millions, especially when hatred and the spirit of revenge are highly developed techniques. Politicians running a global government will use every means for quick results. The atmosphere is ominous. The mightiest of all ages is saturated with expediencies, with adulterated principles and catchwords that capture the mobs. Strange that the spiritual ambassadors are now dreaming of a paradise organized almost exclusively on military, political and economic lines!

World Government, taken realistically, faces enormous odds. Ponder the tensions in the making when the multitudes, as at no other period in history, are themselves becoming the force of law. How long will they come to heel before "One Voice Rule"? The outrages of misinformed mobs, on a global scale, will of course dramatize feeble responses to loyalty. The bait they yearn for is "advantages." They will leave leader after leader in the lurch whenever somebody else offers better bribery. Even a superstate cannot crack down too far to get obedience. You cannot put millions of people in jail.

It would be easy to discount this picture of human nature, easy until one recalls the behavior of the multitudes when "the likest God this planet ever saw" was crucified at Golgotha. For self-safety the masses left the dying Christ who still is, whatever you say, the solitary grandeur of the world. If he with the genius of the spiritual did not hold the crowds in that terrible hour, what can world politicians do with nothing to fall back upon but the might of physical force? On this basis the emancipated (?) masses setting the gravitation of

political history may be ominous. Especially when so many religionists are willing to put their trust in a world government with matchless military power.

#### CHURCHMEN AND THE MASSES

Without some new and more powerful spiritual influence, our age—which is a revolutionary age of the masses—may produce an all encompassing catastrophe. Against the dark background of affairs, the emotional dedication of churchmen, often the most aggressive exponents of World Government, may not be a hopeful omen. The law of political forces (Burkhardt's) raises questions about the ability of this century to avoid "the rule of the masses" in its passage through perilous history. Toynbee wonders about the same thing, "the vast proletariat" now developing "one of the most portentous products of the Westernization of the world."

Religious forces may be failing their assignments in permitting spirituality to be sucked into proletarianizing commonplaces without terrific protests. If Christianity weakens before the secularisms of the day, even the most idealistic of World Governments does not have a chance. The sweep of things the globe over is dark and bleak. The wickednesses of modern life are not withering away and their remedies seem nowhere in sight. A supergovernment is not the answer.

*Of all the ills that human hearts endure  
How small the part that Kings and Laws  
Can cause or cure . . .*

Power is not the way to the Kingdom. There is nothing in human nature to insure that an all-powerful World Government will not widen still more the gap between the tendencies to tyranny and the demands of the moral law. The issue is old and fundamental. In the historic English debate, defiant justice shouted, "The common law protecteth the King." "That," said the embittered monarch, "is a traitorous speech, the King protecteth the law and not the law the King." Are the principles of democracy drifting now again to the side of the King? A socialist weekly emphasizes that in America ". . . the Presidency, rather than Congress, has become the main spring of the constitutional system." How strange that people who have lived under democracy and who have experienced something of its wonder can so terribly misunderstand it. If we are to keep freedom we must undergo the fatigues of supporting it. Only lackeys will want somebody else—*some organization or some selected group*—to assume full responsibility. "In crisis hours peace must be sacrificed for freedom but never freedom for peace!" (Pericles).

Nothing is more anomalous than Christian leadership turning for miracles to peace, and not to liberty, to naked physical might and not to the spirit. "The men of the cloth tend by the nature of their calling

to be naive and easily enlisted in glamorous causes." Of this we have seen much. The World Government idea is, I think, a repeat performance. It is breathtaking to find the ambassadors of the love of Christ crusading for a top-boss rule "so strong that nothing on earth will be able to thwart its compulsions." Especially when not a single guarantee of safety is offered anywhere, and when no magic exists for curbing human nature. Religionists laboring for a monolithic state caricature Galilee.

It is now easy for pulpits to glorify the man-made United Nations, for at the moment Western influences dominate it. What will happen when the deciding power in every issue will be in the hands of others?

Churchmen and military might! Will the drifts eventually spin, Hegel fashion, into a theology of the superstate, a rule to be trusted without a doubt, a force with divine right, a return to the idea that "the King can do no wrong?" Never before did man have such faith in politicians. The concept, in world form, would be a consummation of the principles of Nazi Germany, of Soviet Russia, of pre-Pearl-Harbor Japan: one top dictator, unimpeachable, infallible, the sole controller of men, of resources and of the military might of the globe. It appeals to certain minds in tough times. Certainly nothing is simpler than a Napoleon in charge. History says the gamble will be an evil force but what is history against the vast wishfulness of naive sentimentalism? When before did Christianity aim to meet hardships by setting up an oligarchy or by crowning some politician a king?

World Government will not escape the normal developments of human logic. At the start it will mean to exercise power usefully, but *it will mean to exercise it*. It will mean to govern well, but *it will mean to govern*. It may promise to be a kind master, but *it will be master*. "Power turns those endowed with it into tyrants."

#### REAL RISK INVOLVED

There are some realistic and heavy-duty risks for Christianity in World Government. Today the real issue cries *Think or Perish!* Ponder the terrifying facts! Western civilization is a small segment of mankind. Christianity is smaller still. Enormous possibilities reside in these relations. The ultimate and momentous question is simply this: "Who will govern the world?" More than two billion of the earth's inhabitants are either pagan, atheistic or non-Christian. A composite World Government—if *honestly democratic*—is something for Christianity to ponder and to fear. The very processes of democracy would destroy effective Christian influences, for in such a Government Christianity would be an insignificant and helpless minority. (The average religionist crusading for World Government is

understandable. But there is a basis for fear when the echelons grow fanatical and equate the dream with something like the Kingdom of God.)

Contemplate the nature and psychology of a political government with 800,000,000 communists, all militant atheists; with 700,000,000 Moslems, all anti-Christians; and with almost a billion Indians and Chinese and other kindred Asiatics. In such an assembly, what would be the voice of Christianity? The law of democratic principles would sink it into silence. Other religious groups might be eliminated in the same fashion. But—and it is a terrifying thought—the atheistic powers, protected by numerical superiority, could never be eliminated. Furthermore, "the communists today have more fervor than Christians."

World Government is then a bid to make godless communists and their multi-million allies the governors of the world. Russia and Red China with their communist satellites are thus assured in any democratic World Government the sovereignty of the planet. Such a shutdown on Christianity can be lethal business for mankind. You do not argue this when you know what is happening to the minds of the young people in the Soviet Union. Let's be realistic. A democratic World Government may be Christianity's road to nothingness. Think on these things! In the present United Nations, dominated for the moment by the Western powers, we see the parliamentary maneuverings to block what the West does not want. When the setup is otherwise, can we expect to find a higher behavior in conduct? Can you imagine a presiding Khrushchev giving Christian interests any effective influence? The process itself would decimate the soul and spirit of democracy. It would obliterate every civilized value.

The glamor-dream is to supplant individual nationhoods with one big Jumbo Boss, assuming for reasons nowhere explained that this monstrous government, unlike every other political organization in history, will be administered by something like the love of God, and will forever be immune to any type of political corruption. The devotees cannot imagine that the glowing dream could turn into a terrible and hideous delusion. The fantastiques of history parade through the mind. Think of the Bolshevik vision of 1917. "The world today lives amidst the death agonies of that great dream. Now, only three decades later, a few mesmerized fanatics still exist, but for everybody else it has become clearer and clearer that a type of brutality and exploitation and sheer barbarism, such as history has never before known, is the consummation of those highest of 1917 hopes."

The idea of World Government is a hypnotizing and a fabulously fascinating thing. It is easy to see why millions succumb. But Christianity should comprehend the immense and terrifying implications.

END

# Abraham Lincoln's Faith

RAYMOND W. SETTLE

The question of Abraham Lincoln's religion has proved a knotty one for biographers and students of his life and work. This is due in part to the nature of the evidence in the case, and also to the fact that the evidence, in many instances, has not been thoroughly or impartially examined. The result has been unfortunate, for atheists and believers, Christians and non-Christians alike have found grounds for claiming him as their own.

The logical place to begin the study of a person's religion is his heritage, background and early training. In an examination of this particular phase of the subject Dr. Louis A. Warren has brought to light many interesting facts. Lincoln's great-great-great grandfather, Samuel Lincoln, who came to America in 1637, helped erect Old Ship Church in Hingham, Mass., the oldest church building in America in continual use. His great-great grandfather, Mordecai Lincoln II, married a granddaughter of Obadiah Holmes, noted Baptist minister of Newport, Rhode Island, who was savagely whipped on Boston Common in 1651 for preaching in forbidden services of worship (Benedict, *History of Baptists*). John and Rebecca Lincoln, who migrated from Freehold, New Jersey, to Virginia, were Baptists. They assisted in building the Linville Creek Baptist Church on their own farm. Lincoln's grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, was a member of this congregation. When he located in Kentucky in 1782 he also gave land upon which to build a church, which was called Long Run Baptist Church.

Lincoln's father, Thomas, and his mother, Nancy Hanks, both devout people, built their Kentucky home near Severn's Valley Baptist Church near Elizabethtown, the oldest Baptist organization west of the Alleghenies. Some five miles from the Lincoln cabin was the Little Mount Separate Baptist Church. There is reason to believe this to be the Lincoln family church.

Raymond W. Settle is a retired Baptist minister who devotes his time to historical research and writing on American history, particularly as it concerns religion on the American frontier. He is a graduate of William Jewell College, has held pastorates in Kansas, Missouri and Colorado, and now makes his home at Monte Vista, Colo. He is the author of: *March of the Mounted Riflemen* (Clark, 1940), *Empire on Wheels* (Stanford, 1949) and *Story of Wentworth* (1950).

Dr. Warren also states that when the Thomas Lincoln family moved to Indiana in 1816 they settled near White Pigeon Creek Baptist Church in Warrick County. That Thomas was both an interested and faithful member of it is evidenced by the fact that he was elected one of the trustees and appointed to interview fellow members who were not practicing Christian conduct or church rules. The records of this church show that "Sister Sally Lincoln," sister of the future President, was received by an "experience of grace," April 8, 1826 (*Lincoln Lore*).

## WORTHY SPIRITUAL BACKGROUND

These brief facts indicate that Lincoln's religious heritage was as good as the country afforded. That his forbears, down to his father and mother, were God-fearing men and women who took an active interest in the spiritual affairs of the community in which they lived, is obvious.

The background of Lincoln's home life was excellent. Religion was respected by the members of the family, there is evidence that grace was said at meals, and the parents gave their children such spiritual instruction as they were able (*Lincoln Lore*). He said himself that before he could read he memorized passages from the Bible by hearing his mother quote them as she went about her household duties. Tradition holds that he once said, "My mother was a ready reader and read the Bible to me habitually." These things bore fruit in Sally becoming a member of the church, and it is reasonable to assume that young Abraham was influenced by them.

## TRAGIC PERIOD IN YOUTH

When asked why he did not unite with the church, as did his sister, he said, "If any church will inscribe over its altar as its sole qualification for membership... 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church will I join with all my heart and soul." An indirect reason for his not joining the church may have been the fact that Baptist church membership in those days was much more confined to adults than it is now. Children and unsettled, unmarried young people were

hardly considered as eligible for membership. It could therefore have been that young Abraham did not unite with the church because of a lack of encouragement to do so at the right time.

When he left home and went to Salem, Illinois, a brief disappointing chapter in his life began. In all probability we are right in thinking of it as a tragic period. There he fell under the influence of a group of rough, irreligious young men of about his own age. He wrote silly, sometimes vulgar poetry, and entertained them by imitating the pioneer preachers of the day. About this time a fad for reading French philosophy and free-thinking literature swept the country. He devoured Volney's *Ruins* and Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*. That such works left a deep impression upon his mind, there can be no doubt.

#### EXPERIENCE OF CHANGE

Then a change came over him. Although we cannot be certain what brought it about, we know that he turned away from ideas which were at variance with his early teaching. The Rev. James F. Jaques, a Methodist minister, said that after hearing him preach in 1839 on the text, "Ye must be born again," Lincoln visited him to talk and pray with him concerning his soul's salvation. "I have seen hundreds brought to Christ," said Mr. Jaques, "and if ever a person was converted Abraham Lincoln was."

So far as is known Lincoln did not corroborate this story, but he does say later that about that time a deep experience of change came to him. When charged by the Rev. Peter Cartwright, his opponent in the 1846 Congressional campaign, with having expressed anti-Christian sentiments, he went to see his old friend Mrs. Rankin. In their conversation he said that there had come into his life "sad events and a loss" that she knew about. As a consequence he was "tossed amid a sea of questioning." In spite of it all he grasped a higher thought that reached into eternity with "a clearness and satisfaction" hitherto unknown to him and his attitude toward the Bible changed. He still had doubts, he said, but there was also in his heart a strong desire for a more perfect faith. It is believed by many that the "loss" was the death of Ann Rutledge.

#### A SEEKING SPIRIT

In the same conversation he said to Mrs. Rankin, "Probably it is to be my lot to go on in a twilight, feeling and reasoning my way through life, as questioning, doubting Thomas did. But in my poor, maimed, withered way, I bear with me as I go on a seeking spirit of desire for faith that was with him of olden time, who, in his need, exclaimed 'Help thou my unbelief.'" Unquestionably, in the pre-Washington days at least, he was torn at times by a struggle between

doubt and faith, belief and skepticism. Herndon said, "I admit that Mr. Lincoln, in his moments of melancholy and terrible gloom, was living on the borderland between theism and atheism—sometimes quite wholly dwelling in atheism—in his happier moments swinging back to theism and dwelling lovingly there."

A study of Lincoln's life impresses one with the fact that his great heart hungered for a satisfying faith. "I am not a Christian," he once said, "but God knows I would be one." Critics have read too much, and friends too little, into this agonized cry of a seeking soul. Being familiar with the rigid creeds and practices of Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and others of his day, and not being able to ally himself with any of them, he classified himself as an unbeliever. All reasonable evidence in the case is to the effect that he was too harsh with himself.

An inquiry into any person's religious faith must begin with his attitude toward God. On this point Lincoln was as orthodox as Peter Cartwright. He frequently declared his unwavering faith in divine sovereignty and an unchangeable purpose for the world. He was fond of quoting Hamlet:

*There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them as we may.*

In the second inaugural address he said, "The Almighty has his own purposes."

#### CONSCIOUS OF GOD'S GUIDANCE

Moreover, he believed that God was directing him in the stupendous task he had undertaken to perform. In his farewell address to friends and neighbors at Springfield, after comparing his responsibility with that of Washington, he said, "Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail."

In a conversation with L. E. Chittenden in Washington he said, "I have had so many evidences of his direction . . . that I cannot doubt that this power (which controlled his will) comes from above. . . I am satisfied that when the Almighty wants me to do or not to do a particular thing, he finds a way of letting me know it."

Lincoln's attitude toward Christ is of vital importance. When he learned that twenty of the twenty-three ministers in Springfield in 1860 were opposed to him on the question of freedom for slaves, he said to Newton Bateman; "I know I am right, for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God." Dr. W. E. Barton sums up his appraisal of Lincoln's religious life by saying, "Abraham Lincoln believed in God, in Christ, in the Bible, in prayer, in duty, and in immortality" (*The Soul of Abraham Lincoln*). His own statement regarding his experience should be taken at full face value. Neils John Peterson quotes him as saying, "When I

left Springfield I asked the people to pray for me. I was not a Christian. When I buried my son, the severest test of my life, I was not a Christian. But when I went to Gettysburg and saw the graves of thousands of our soldiers, I then and there consecrated myself to Christ."

As to the Bible, Lincoln's constant appeal to its words and teachings bespeaks honest faith in it. Carl Sandburg said, "Before he had learned to read as a boy he heard his mother saying over certain verses, day by day as she worked. He had learned these verses by heart; the tones of his mother's voice was in them" (*Abraham Lincoln; The Prairie Years*). To Joshua Speed he once said, "I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all of this book you can upon reason, and the balance by faith, and you will live and die a better man. It is the best book God has given to men." Of him Theodore Roosevelt said, "Lincoln built up his entire reading upon his study of the Bible. He mastered it, he became a man who knew the Book and who instinctively put into practice what he had been taught therein."

His use of Scripture passages in his public addresses is well-known. Edgar DeWitt Jones read all of them, and marked the passages wherein he quoted the Bible

or referred to it. "Some of the pages," he said, "are literally covered with pencilings; some single paragraphs contain as many as a dozen of these. The fair and inescapable conclusion is that his devotion to the Bible was that of an honest, sincere man."

Dr. Barton also said, "Too much of the effort to prove that Abraham Lincoln was a Christian began and ended in the effort to show that on certain theological topics he cherished correct opinions. Abraham Lincoln was not a theologian, and several of his theological opinions may have been incorrect; but there is good reason to believe that he was a true Christian. The world has need of few theologians, and of a great many Christians." That he had come to believe himself eligible for membership in the church is seen in his remark to Dr. Phineas D. Gurley, pastor of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church of Washington in 1865. "I have made up my mind," he said. "At your next communion I shall apply for admission to your church." Before that time arrived an assassin's bullet had quenched his life. This was tragically unfortunate, for had he lived to carry out his announced design, the question of whether he was a Christian probably never would have arisen. As it is, each investigator must arrive at his own conclusions.

END

## Death: Yesterday and Today

S. BARTON BABBAGE

An amusing incident in Noel Coward's play, *This Happy Breed* (Act III, Scene 1), finds Frank and his sister Sylvia sitting in the lounge room. Sylvia, a soured spinster, has become an ardent Christian Scientist. Frank and Sylvia have finished supper and are listening to the wireless. Frank's wife Ethel is in the kitchen.

**SYLVIA:** There's not so much to do since Mrs. Flint passed on.  
**FRANK:** I do wish you wouldn't talk like that, Sylvia, it sounds so soft.

S. Barton Babbage is Principal of Ridley College and Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne, Australia. A native of New Zealand, where he pursued studies leading to the B.A. and M.A. degrees, he earned the Ph.D. degree in London and the Th.D. in Australia. He is author of *Puritanism and Richard Bancroft* and *Man in Nature and Grace*. The excerpt in Principal Babbage's essay from *This Happy Breed* (copyright 1943 by Noel Coward) is reprinted by permission.

**SYLVIA:** I don't know what you mean, I'm sure.

**FRANK:** (firmly) Mother died, see! First of all she got flu and that turned to pneumonia and the strain of that affected her heart, which was none too strong at the best of times, and she died. Nothing to do with passing on at all.

**SYLVIA:** How do you know?

**FRANK:** I admit its only your new way of talking, but it gets me down, see?

(Ethel comes in)

**ETHEL:** What are you shouting about?

**FRANK:** I'm not shouting about anything at all. I'm merely explaining to Sylvia that mother died. She didn't pass on or pass over or pass out—she died.

This conversation is peculiarly modern. It reflects our self-consciousness, our embarrassment about the fact of death. Death is no longer regarded as a subject of polite conversation; it has become a convention to speak of death euphemistically, and to use tactful cir-

cumlocutions. Frank's bluntness is not only callous but crude.

In this matter there has been a radical change in social behavior patterns. In the nineteenth century the processes of birth and reproduction were never mentioned in polite society, but the processes of death were an accepted subject of conversation. Today the processes of death are never mentioned in polite society, but the processes of birth and reproduction are almost a matter of daily discussion. Our grandparents, in their embarrassment and self-consciousness over the facts of birth, said that babies were found under gooseberry bushes; and we, in our embarrassment and self-consciousness over the facts of death, speak of "passing on" (Geoffrey Gorer, "The Pornography of Death," *The Encounter*, October, 1955).

#### DEATH BED A TRADITIONAL THEME

This can be illustrated from the field of literature. It is difficult to recall a play or a novel written during the past 25 years which has a "death-bed scene" in it, describing in detail the death of a major character from natural causes. Yet this topic was a set piece for most eminent Victorian and Edwardian writers, and it evoked their finest prose. To create the maximum pathos or edification, they employed the most elaborate technical devices and supplied a wealth of imaginative detail.

A single example will suffice. The climax to *The Old Curiosity Shop* is the death of little Nell. The book was published in serial form, and, when successive installments began to foreshadow the death of the child, Dickens was "inundated with imploring letters recommending poor little Nell to mercy." Dickens was acutely aware of the artistic demands of the situation, and for days he was in a state of emotional tension. Dickens had to nerve himself to describe the death. He confided, "All night I have been pursued by the child, and this morning I am unrefreshed and miserable." He felt the suffering so intensely that he described it as "anguish unspeakable." Writing to George Cattermole, he said, "I am breaking my heart over this story."

#### TREMENDOUS IMPACT

When the final installment was published, with the lithograph illustration showing the dead child lying on a bed, with pieces of holly on her breast, the resulting emotional excitement was almost unprecedented. Macready, the noted actor, returning from the theater, saw the print, and a cold chill ran through his blood. "I have never read printed words which gave me so much pain," he noted in his diary. "I could not weep for some time. Sensations, sufferings, have returned to me, that are terrible to awaken." Daniel O'Connor, the

Irish Member of Parliament, reading the book in a railway carriage, was convulsed with sobs and groaned, "He should not have killed her," and threw the book out the window. Thomas Carlyle was utterly overcome. Waiting crowds on the pier in New York harbor shouted to the passengers, "Is little Nell dead?" The news flashed across the United States and rough and hardy pioneers dissolved in tears. Lord Jeffrey, one of Her Majesty's judges, was found by a friend in the library of his house, with his head bowed on the table. When his friend entered the room, she saw that his eyes were filled with tears. "I had no idea that you had bad news or cause of grief," she said, "or I would not have come. Is anyone dead?" "Yes, indeed," he replied, "I'm a great goose to give myself away, but I couldn't help it. You'll be sorry to hear that little Nelly, Boz's little Nell, is dead." (For a detailed reference, see Edgar Johnson, *Charles Dickens, His Tragedy and Triumph*, London, 1953, Vol. I, p. 304.)

#### MODERN FLIGHT FROM DEATH

Today, the situation is very different. Without any certainty in the life to come, man finds that the facts of natural death and physical decomposition have become too horrible to contemplate, let alone to discuss or describe. It is symptomatic of our present condition that one of the most flourishing sects in the world today is Christian Science, which denies the fact of physical death and which refuses to allow the word to be printed in the columns of the *Christian Science Monitor*.

A modern writer has said: "The fact of death is the great human repression, the universal 'complex.' Dying is the reality man dare not face, and to escape which he summons all his resources . . . Death is muffled up in illusions" (H. F. Lovell Cocks, *By Faith Alone*, 1943, p. 55). And yet we cannot live indefinitely on illusions; we know that eventually we must stop kidding ourselves. Some of our best thinkers and writers are courageous enough to say that we must face the fact of death. George Every, a gifted and sensitive poet, said: "In the younger poets the urgent problem is the imminence of death, the need of some significance that can be attached to dying in a world where there is no common belief in immortality" ("Designs for Culture," *Humanities*, Vol. II, No. 2, 1948). Storm Jameson, in an address on the writer's situation, echoed the same thought:

At this moment in history, a writer who concerns himself with anything less than the destiny of man on the earth is only amusing himself. If that is the thing he does best, he should do it. And we, when we want to be amused, pleased, enchanted . . . will listen to him. But in the anxiety that weighs upon us now, what we sometimes want most of all is to be answered . . . I propose a way to test the value of the writers of our day. Not a test to find out whether he is honest or dishonest, brave or cowardly. *Nol*—what we should ask the

writer is only this: Is he able to tell us about the destiny of man, our destiny, in such a way that we have the courage to live it, and gaily? If not, then he may be a very clever writer, he may even be honest, but he is not a great writer—not for us [*The Writer's Situation and other Essays*, London, 1950, pp. 18-19].

The Victorians surrounded death with pathos and with sentiment. Twentieth-century man is cynical about sentiment and callous about death. What are the possibilities before us now? They are, quite simply, the alternatives of either brave endurance or triumphant conquest.

#### FATALISTIC RESIGNATION

First, there are those who face the inevitable fact of death calmly and stoically, without flinching and complaining, in a spirit of fatalistic resignation. They contemplate the bleak prospect of "emptiness, absence, the void," and, in the classic words of Ronald Duncan, they point to the darkness and say, *This Way to the Tomb* (London, 1933). They proclaim a destiny of "dust and ashes."

Bertrand Russell is a typical representative: "I believe that when I die I shall rot, and nothing of my ego will survive. I am not young, and I love life. But I should scorn to shiver with terror at the thought of annihilation" (*What I Believe*, London, 1925, p. 21). No one can despise the real courage of this confession. But only a few heroic souls are able to face the chilling and cheerless prospect of the waiting grave with such unflinching fortitude.

#### TRIUMPHANT VICTORY

What is the alternative? The alternative is triumphant conquest. "Thanks be to God," says the Apostle Paul, "who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." On the one hand, the Christian recognizes the horror of death—death indeed is a hated enemy. On the other hand, the Christian recognizes the reality of Christ's resurrection and the hope of the life to come. For the Christian the horror is submerged in the hope, so that the sting of death is taken away and the victory of the grave is overcome.

Dr. Samuel Johnson, noted lexicographer and prince of conversationalists, was a devout churchman and an earnest Christian. He was concerned about the licentiousness and levity of his age, both of which he endeavored vigorously to combat and withstand. He was a man of personal integrity and public rectitude, and he was also diligent in the practice of private prayer. Nevertheless, he had a deep horror of death and a lively fear of the coming judgment. He believed that those who were indifferent to such dread realities were guilty of shallow insensibility, and that they were not only foolish but irresponsible. In the *Rambler* (No. 110) he wrote the following sober thoughts:

If he who considers himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes round him without shuddering with horror, or panting with insecurity; what can he judge of himself, but that he is not yet awakened to sufficient convictions.

#### SENSE OF JUDGMENT

Samuel Johnson, for his part, was aware not only of the precariousness of life but also of the reality of coming judgment. He was fearful of the sin of presumption, despite his own earnest faith and exemplary conduct.

James Boswell has recorded the following conversation:

JOHNSON: . . . I am afraid that I may be one of those who shall be damned. (*Looking dimly*)

DR. ADAMS: What do you mean by damned?

JOHNSON: (*Passionately and loudly*) Sent to hell, Sir, and punished everlasting . . .

BOSWELL: But may not a man attain to such a degree of hope as not to be uneasy from the fear of death?

JOHNSON: A man may have such a degree of hope as to keep him quiet. You see I am not quiet, from the vehemence with which I talk; but I do not despair.

MRS. ADAMS: You seem, Sir, to forget the merits of our Redeemer.

JOHNSON: Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer; but my Redeemer has said that he will set some on his right hand and some on his left.

He was in gloomy agitation, and said, "I'll have no more on't" (*The Life of Samuel Johnson*, 1927, Vol. II, p. 526). Nevertheless, when Johnson came to die, he was able to face man's last enemy with calm and cheerful composure. "He was able to be cheerful in spite of a deep belief in divine judgment, because he also had a deep belief in the gospel of salvation" (Elton Trueblood, *Dr. Johnson's Prayers*, London, 1947, p. 13). His deep fear was overshadowed, and therefore silenced, by a deep hope.

#### THE CHRISTIAN REALITIES

This is the authentic Christian experience. On the one hand, there is the fact of death, inevitable and inescapable, frightening and forbidding; on the other hand, there is the fact of Christ's resurrection, irradiating the darkness of the grave, dispelling the gloom of death, "bringing life and immortality to life through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10).

Strengthened by Christ, we face death calm and unafraid; we are preserved from sentimentality on the one hand and synicism on the other. We are able to say with the Apostle Paul and all the faithful: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:55,57).

# When We Face the Dying

*A Symposium*

No generation in history has been so exposed to the continuing possibility of sudden, violent human destruction as ours. And few generations have been so ill-prepared to meet it.

People of the twentieth century have tended to look upon death as a universal animal experience, the inevitability of natural existence, a tragic and non-rational prank played upon creatures harassed by a sense of destiny.

Religious cults thrive by dismissing death as an illusion. One columnist suggests that few people, except 19-year-old poets and suicides, any longer behave as though death were inevitable. Even the medical profession prefers to speak softly of "the terminally ill" rather than of the dying. Modern man shuns any real thought of dying; he may make a will to dispose of his property but neglects funeral arrangements for the interment of his own body. Least of all does he think of God and divine judgment as the next stage in the drama of human appointment.

Multitudes whose Christian forefathers regarded death as the faithful soul's transition to eternal bliss, or the body's sleep before its resurrection, no longer know how to face death.

Except for the ministry to the newborn, ministry to the dying is perhaps the most delicate and demanding that the clergyman and physician must perform. Perhaps there are few more awesome moments in their lives than face-to-face meetings with one who is about to learn that the illness from which he or she suffers may lead to death in a matter of days or weeks. In such hours, the distressed will turn to the physician and minister for truth and for the assurance that the verdict of their human experience is still *good news*.

"When you face the dying," asked CHRISTIANITY TODAY of a group of outstanding Christian physicians and ministers, "what is your word to them?"

Many manuals and texts that deal with the care of the sick and dying come from authors who are distrustful of traditional Christianity, and who have allowed their theological revolt to shape their counsel and ministry in the sickroom. "What word do you have in such a moment," inquired CHRISTIANITY TODAY, "for the unbeliever and believer who ask you for the facts?" The answers of these men are given in this issue's symposium, "When We Face the Dying."

On Easter Sunday some years ago the writer had spoken at a sunrise service in Turlock, California, and was being transported by a Christian physician who stopped along the way to visit a patient seriously ill. "Suppose you knew that the patient is about to die," I said, "and he asks you as his Christian doctor for the best light you have on his condition. What would you tell him?" The physician replied, "I'd tell him seriously that sometimes human life is cut short by unforeseen accident—without a moment's notice. But God in his gracious providence has given to him abundant time to get ready—perhaps a week, perhaps longer or less—and that there is extra opportunity, mercifully provided, for the putting of all his affairs in order."

Some months ago five Christian doctors participated in a symposium sponsored by San Francisco Graduate Chapter of Christian Medical Society on "The Care and Management of the Dying Patient." They faced such queries as "Should the physician tell the non-Christian patient his diagnosis and prognosis?" (Answer: "Yes, in order that the dying person might settle . . . his spiritual affairs." Neglecting to tell the facts would inevitably "be followed . . . by spoken lies and deceitful actions.") "Won't it frighten, upset or alarm the patient?" ("The thing that frightens a dying person is fear of the unknown. . . . We . . . alarm him to action . . . that he might . . . turn to Christ. . . . If he is reconciled to God . . . fear leaves him.") "Won't it precipitate a psychosis?" ("Would it not be better to risk psychiatric decompensation as well as physical cardiac decompensation and give . . . opportunity of choosing Christ . . . ?") "What approach should the doctor use?" ("Best to be as straightforward as possible. . . . Avoid ambiguous questions. . . . Make the way of salvation clear. . . . Rapport with the patient is a tremendous adjunct, but dependency of the patient on the Christian physician must be guarded against. . . . The Christian physician can do much by stopping for a moment and reading from the Bible along with the professional conduction of the ill patient. . . . Try to give the patient assurance and spiritual hope.")

In the following symposium on "When We Face the Dying" (pp. 12-17), CHRISTIANITY TODAY draws back the curtains of the sickroom and discloses convictions of some prominent physicians about Christian administration in the hours of impending death. ED.

**"a tremendous responsibility  
as a Christian to warn . . ."**

**RALPH L. BYRON, JR.**

The Christian doctor faces a major problem in speaking on spiritual matters to the dying patient. He must not force his message on the patient nor take advantage of the trust which is his as a physician. However, he has a tremendous responsibility as a Christian to warn the wicked man. Truly he must embrace God's wisdom if he is to combine these responsibilities.

In my own case I start the day with an hour in prayer and the Bible. I put great emphasis on memorizing the Word. I pray that God will help me to recognize opportunities and not pass them over.

Openings may come in several ways. A Bible or Testament on the night stand may be one natural opening to talk about spiritual things. Or, I may greet a patient with a well-known quotation and follow it with a scripture verse. This frequently leads into an opportunity to open the Scriptures.

In giving God's Word to a patient, I make it "plain Scripture." That is, I let the Word speak for itself. It is the prayer of my heart that I might make the Gospel so plain that they can never stand before the judgment seat and say, "I did not hear." I present the truths of the Bible quietly, without emotionalism, but with sincerity. Frequently this leads to an opportunity for me to share my testimony with them.

I can perhaps illustrate how this works. I was making the rounds one morning and noted that one of my patients, a 27-year-old mother of two children—dying with cancer—appeared very frightened. I delayed my rounds, sat on the side of her bed, and quietly quoted verse after verse to her from the Bible without comment. I continued for about an hour. Nearly halfway through I noted that the strained, fearful look in her face disappeared. When I finished she turned her head, looked me straight in the eye and said, "Thanks; that's just what I needed. I've just taken Christ as my Saviour. Now I'm ready to die."

RALPH L. BYRON, JR., M.D., is Director of the Hospital for Tumors and Allied Diseases, and Chief of Surgery, at City of Hope Medical Center, Duarte, California.

**"truth tempered with love . . .  
can raise morale . . ."**

**G. A. HEMWALL**

Early in my medical career, I was faced with having to make a decision as to management of a patient with an incurable disease, facing death. I was led at that time to follow a principle expressed in a phrase

from Psalms, "I have chosen the way of truth." This has been my basic pattern for handling all types of seriously ill patients.

Truth can be cold, and if presented in that way, it can have a devastating effect on a person's morale. However, truth tempered with love and understanding can actually raise morale, and produce a cooperative patient who is not worried about facing some intangible unknown. The confidence of the patient in the doctor is increased, and a kindly explanation of the expected course of the disease, and the things which will be done for him medically, help to allay the fears that he may have. Scriptures, such as II Corinthians 5, are a tremendous help to the Christian.

The unbeliever presents to me the greatest challenge. He must be led to the understanding that not only does he face physical death, but that he is already dead spiritually, and that he must be born again before physical death. This combined problem calls for the utmost care in broaching the subject to the patient, and usually it is best introduced in response to questions that he will ask. In some cases, it may be better to have the cooperation of a minister, or another Christian, in a spiritual presentation and bringing the person to the crucial decision. In our hospital we have had invaluable assistance from our nurses in this regard.

As the years have gone by, my only regrets are the instances in which I have deviated from the above course because of pressure from relatives, or lack of faithfulness on my part.

GUSTAVE A. HEMWALL, M.D., is engaged in general practice in Chicago and is President of the Board of Directors of Christian Medical Society.

**"God's will does not always  
correspond with ours . . ."**

**WILLIAM B. KIESEWETTER**

In dealing with parents who give little evidence of any understanding of spiritual things, my approach is to portray for them the medical situation of their child and point out the all-embracing nature of God's love for children. This gives me a general basis for pointing out that even mortal illness must fall within the confines of God's love because God loved humanity enough to sacrifice his only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, for its salvation. Since most of my patients who are seriously ill fall in the group under five years of age, I believe that I can hold out scriptural reasons why the child may go to spend eternity with the Lord because they have not reached the so-called age of accountability. This gives me the opportunity to challenge the parents themselves with the claims of Jesus Christ.

because they have had the opportunity to make an individual choice in the matter.

Certainly, it is always much easier to talk to those who know the Saviour because they are reassured that God's will is being worked out for their child. Often they need to understand that God's will does not always correspond with our will and therefore does not mean that the child will necessarily get well. However, we can express the same confidence that the child will go to be with our Heavenly Father if it has not reached the age of personal decision. As comfort to the parents I often quote the Apostle Paul who said that he wished to be "with Christ, which is far better." So we, as believers, cannot wish to withhold from our loved ones this same rich inheritance.

I do not always get the opportunity to speak with parents in such direct fashion before their child's death, so I make it a rule to write a word of sympathy and compassion to them several weeks after the child's passing. In this I again express the thought of God's love as seen in Calvary.

WILLIAM B. KIESEWETTER, M.D., is Chief of Surgical Staff at Children's Hospital, University of Pittsburgh.

**"were I faced with this . . .  
my resource is God . . ."**

### C. EVERETT KOOP

For more than a decade, my practice has been confined to the surgical problems of infancy and childhood. This means that I usually have two parents and occasionally a grandparent or two as a captive audience when it becomes necessary to talk about the imminent death of a child.

If I know the parents to be unbelieving, or am uncertain of their position, I could not stand up emotionally under the repeated necessity of breaking such news to them if I doubted for one moment the sovereignty of God. From that position, unless the door for further talk is completely closed, I proceed to narrow the discussion to the Lord Jesus Christ and my own dependence upon him for salvation and daily guidance. Then I confess that were I faced with the problem of a dying child, my only resource would be to him for understanding and strength. If possible, I pray with such people, reiterating the Gospel, my own stand, and praying for strength for them.

It should be stated that in all my dealings with parents I attempt to be forthright, explaining the surgical problem at hand in the simplest of language and in the most authoritative fashion. When discussing the spiritual side of the situation, I maintain the same positive approach and speak with assurance.

When dealing with people I know to be Christian, trusting the Lord, and walking with him, I recall to them the promise, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." From there, I proceed to a reaffirmation of our hope in eternal life, reunion with believers, and the reality of I Peter 5:7.

If the question of "faith-healing" is brought up, I make it a point never to pray for medical miracles but rather ask, "Thy will be done." I attempt to place absolutely no emphasis on "faith-healing" of the 1957 popular variety. I affirm my belief in the Lord's complete ability to do anything, but it is apparent that it is his intent not to perform miracles in reference to certain medical problems in this age.

C. EVERETT KOOP, M.D., is Surgeon-in-Chief of The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

**"only a few patients want  
to know the hard facts . . ."**

### STANLEY W. OLSON

The patient usually comes to the physician, whether he be Christian or non-Christian, for professional advice. To interject, unsolicited by the patient, one's personal religious beliefs into this professional relationship is unethical. As a Christian, I must support this position or alternatively grant to physicians of every religious conviction freedom to exploit the professional situation for proselyting.

Prognosis by the physician of the outcome of an illness is not as accurate as either he or the patient would like it to be, nor is it as accurate as he might like the patient to believe it to be. Only those physicians who have had wide experience know how fallible a prognosis, given in good faith, can be. The physician assumes certain liabilities and then justifiably seeks to protect himself by providing some latitude.

It is my opinion that only a few patients want to know the hard facts if they are suspicious their illness may be fatal. The physician must try to understand what the patient is really saying by the words he uses. For example, the cancer patient may say, "This isn't something serious from which I could die, is it, Doctor?" This patient probably is seeking reassurance rather than facts.

A physician has no more difficulty than any other person in conveying by his personal life the nature of his religious beliefs. He can, by his compassion, and by his efforts to lead a Christlike life, invite the confidence of his patient who may then seek spiritual advice from him as well as professional. When requested by word or any other valid form of human expression, he may speak to a believing or unbelieving

patient of his own faith in God, confident in the rightness of his judgments and the wideness of his mercy.

I have not tried to evade the question, "What word do you have in such a moment?" But the situation is not simple—it is extremely complex. What one says (or does) depends on how much he understands of the situation—emotionally and intellectually as well as spiritually. There are no special words that physicians—or ministers—can use routinely. Each must be carefully selected to meet the needs of the individual patient faced with what to him is a completely unique situation. Ministers must, I believe, give careful study to the special problems of the sick and the dying if their ministry to them is to be spiritually effective.

STANLEY W. OLSON, M.D., is Dean of Baylor University Medical School and former director, the Mayo Foundation.

**"apart from the Christ,  
only narcotics and sympathy . . ."**

**J. WINSLOW SMITH**

The patient who is "sick unto death" becomes a person very important and extremely individual. Not many are called upon to face this time with absolute knowledge of the impending mortal finality. Fatigue, unconsciousness, or sudden physiological crisis carries one into eternity without warning.

This is a time that is real proof of therapy. Apart from the dynamic message of Christ, a physician can offer only narcotics and sympathy.

The words of our Master, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you"—these are to the seeking unbeliever a specific drug that will remove the turmoil of doubt and set the mind at ease. What peace! They are to the believer a soothing balm.

There will be those to whom we cannot speak. These must *see* Christ in us and feel his presence by our gentleness, understanding and sympathy.

J. WINSLOW SMITH, M.D., is engaged in general surgical practice in Philadelphia.

**"the sovereignty of God . . .  
is a great comfort . . ."**

**HAROLD JOHN OCKENGA**

I have never been called on for spiritual facts by an unbeliever who knew he was dying, nor have I had to break the news of imminent death to any unbeliever.

But I have been asked by relatives of a dying unbeliever to visit him and to bear witness. Let me use one particular illustration.

A devout Christian who listened to me on the radio but was not a member of Park Street Church called me and asked me if I would go visit her husband who had had a serious heart attack and was expected to die. He did subsequently die within ten days or two weeks. My approach to him was to appeal to his knowledge of the Christian testimony of his faithful wife. This he freely admitted and confessed. Next, I asked if he knew where he was going. With his indefinite response I then pressed the issue as to whether he did not want to know where he was going. A reluctant "yes" was given and I thereupon expounded the Gospel in its three main points: First, that all men are sinners according to the Scripture. I used Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:10, 23, and other passages. He freely admitted that he was a sinner. Second, I proclaimed the biblical truth that Christ died for sinners, according to Romans 3:24-26; 5:8; I Peter 2:21-24; 3:18, and so forth. Last, I pointed out to him that whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, for God is no respector of persons. With this I joined appeal to the thief who at the last moment called upon the Lord and was saved. This man responded affirmatively, prayed his prayer of confession, repentance and faith, after the form of prayer which I gave to him and became a Christian. He died in the faith. The sequel to it was that almost immediately after this his widow united with Park Street Church and is a member there today.

When I am requested to bring comfort to a believer who is facing the fact of death, I open the conversation by drawing the person to a statement of his own awareness of the imminence of death, then I turn his attention to the plan and purpose of God for our lives with such Scripture as, "It is appointed to man to die," and "There is a time to be born and a time to die," and that all of our times are in God's hands. The emphasis upon the sovereignty of God as displayed in so many Scripture references is a comfort to a believer. A reiteration of the fact that God has a plan for every life and that one life is not to be compared to another is very helpful.

Next, I attempt to ascertain whether the believer is ready to go, pointing out the magnificent teachings of Scripture about the joys, privileges, blessings and rewards of being "with Christ" (Phil. 1:21-23; II Cor. 5:6-9). Next, I make a point to talk about heaven, the biblical description of heaven and of the loved ones who have gone on before. Always, of course, I conclude with prayer, often quoting from the parable of the pounds, or the talents, and of the necessity to stand before the judgment seat of Christ with the possibility of hearing well done, good and faithful servant.

Of course, there is no form which I use and everything is extemporaneous and applied to the particular incident. Thus, I cannot be too definite about details.

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**"we trust the goodness  
and mercy of God . . ."**

**SAMUEL M. SHOEMAKER**

It seems to me that perhaps the most important thing for a minister to manifest in the presence of a dying person is his own quiet sympathy, his personal (as against merely official) concern for the family, his assumption of faith in God and in everlasting life, and a few simple words to express this faith rather than a disquisition upon it. People do not need expositions at such a time, but simple expressions of faith, quietly and modestly expressed. Here, if ever, what we are and really believe speaks so loudly that people cannot hear what we say.

As to ministering to the dying person, let us be in constant prayer before and as we come into the room. There is no approved course of action. Let us be sensitive to any moment of consciousness and say to the dying only short, simple things that express our concern, or our faith that he or she is in God's good hands. I seldom refer to death itself. If the individual is conscious and asks, "Am I going?" let us say something like, "It looks so. Let us have no fear. God is here. Let me commend you again to him," and then a very brief prayer and benediction. If the person is conscious, of course, a brief service of Holy Communion, or giving the consecrated elements if they have been reserved, will bring the greatest comfort, if it be part of his tradition; the familiarity of the words and acts requires little effort of attention, and the knowledge that God is reaching out through the sacrament is strength and comfort to that one. If the person be alone without family, he may want to feel the touch of our hand on his, so that we meet the occasion with him as fully as we can. If there be fear, pray it quietly and positively away, asking God's presence and forgiving love. One has the sense that our own real feelings are what matter most: they will express themselves in touch, in words and in the radiation of quiet faith. Let us avoid officiousness, or too much talk. Now and then someone will ask a real question about the hereafter: let us not fear to say what we believe and why, but not so much long arguments as the reasoned steps in belief and the positive elements of our faith in Christ and in everlasting life. How often do I quote, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

If the dying person has ignored God consistently, and shows fear, let us speak freely of God's forgiveness offered to honest souls, even at the last minute (witness the thief on the cross); and in any situation where God's justice and mercy seem in conflict, the verse in Genesis is a help, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25). Do not be afraid to say no man understands all these things: we trust the goodness and mercy of God. If we really believe in him this way ourselves, it will get over by contagion much more than by argument.

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**"an enemy whose power  
has been overthrown . . ."**

**J. R. W. STOTT**

One's ministry to the dying seems to me to depend in its approach on whether the patient knows his true condition or not.

In the case of unbelievers, I believe it would be right to desire their enlightenment, but probably one should only do so in cooperation with the doctor and the family. I would seek an opportunity to unfold the way of salvation in the Gospel. If the patient is very ill, I would be content to keep to the simplicities of a Scripture like John 3:16, 6:37, or Matthew 11:28, or I Timothy 1:15. In order to bring into the patient's consciousness what his true position before God is, I have sometimes asked him to imagine that we were standing before God's judgment throne, and that he were to ask us in what we are trusting for our belief that he will welcome us into his presence in heaven. The patient's answer nearly always reveals clearly whether he is trusting in himself and his own works or in Christ and his finished work. If the patient accepts Christ, I would seek to bring him into a restful assurance of salvation. I would also seek to remember his family who are themselves in need of help at this time. If he or they ask "why?" concerning this trial, I would not try to argue about the problem of suffering, but point them to the cross as the proof and pledge of God's love.

If the patient is a believer, I would probably enquire gently if he has made all necessary practical preparations for his death as a Christian should, whether he has made his will and adequately provided for his family, for instance.

If he knows that he is dying, and is not surrendered to this possibility, I would take him to some such verse as Psalm 18:30, "As for God, his way is perfect," and seek to lead him into a position of repose in the will

of God. I would also remind him of the death and resurrection of Jesus through whom death had been "abolished" (Heb. 2:14, II Tim. 1:10). I would remind him that in the New Testament death is likened to an insect whose sting has been drawn and to an enemy whose power has been overthrown (I Cor. 15:55). Passages of Scripture which I might read to him include Psalm 23, John 14:1-6, Romans 5:1-11 and 8:31-39, II Corinthians 5:1-9, Philippians 1:22-23, I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 5:8-11, II Timothy 4:6-8, Hebrews 2:14-18, and Revelation 1:13-18.

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**"this is a current fad  
... to conceal the truth"**

### CARY N. WEISIGER III

In a ministry of 20 years I have not had many opportunities to face a death sentence with people. Fads of the day pressurize people to conform. As there are fads in fashions, the arts, automobiles, politics, sports and amusements, so there are fads in religion and medicine. The current fad about incurable disease is to conceal the truth. Most of the time ministers are bound by the conspiracy of silence, evasion or downright falsehood. The old idea of helping to prepare the patient for death and destiny is hardly even entertained. The current slogan is: "Drug them into eternity."

Fear of death is completely pagan. To brush aside fear and to look the probable outcome squarely in the eye is Christian.

I honor doctors, nurses, families, and patients who have chosen not to play the game of deceit and who have frankly accepted diagnosis though seemingly fatal. In these situations which I think have almost always concerned Christians I have been led to dwell on four themes:

1. God may yet give healing.
2. All suffering is controlled for God's glory and our good.
3. The promises of Christ for life, death, and eternity hold true.
4. Heaven is a glorious place of rest and fellowship where those who have departed to be with Christ await the resurrection and its crowning events.

Two hymns have been especially comforting to quote, "O Love That Will Not Let Me Go," and "Just As I Am."

Where I have talked with patients whose experience of salvation seemed doubtful I have centered on the love of Jesus and his forgiveness. If I felt awkward

about putting this into conversation I have put it into prayer. Sometimes I have prayed close to the ear of patients who were in coma, trusting God's Spirit to apply truth at the gate of death.

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**"the sentences of hope  
took on new meaning"**

### MAURICE A. P. WOOD

We were on the Normandy beaches in June, 1944, during the invasion of Europe. A heavy shell had just landed, and the doctor and I were kneeling beside young soldiers wounded by the explosion. When we had lifted a young corporal onto a stretcher and into an ambulance, the doctor turned quietly to me and said, "Padre, that boy is severely wounded in the spine. He is conscious, and in no very great pain, but he cannot live more than a day or two. It could even be a matter of hours. I think it would be good if you went with him to the tent hospital." I remember reading to Charlie, the young corporal, from John 14:1-6, and I have used this passage constantly.

1. It starts with the human problem of an anxious heart, and Jesus with all his human sympathy says, "Let not your heart be troubled."

2. It draws upon the feeble general belief in God, which most men have, and it seeks to fan that belief into a true saving faith. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." We lead the seeker, in the extremity of his illness, to repentance from his sin, and a personal saving faith in Jesus Christ. Here I taught Charlie to say after me: "It's trusting Jesus, and trusting him *all the way*." This he said slowly and haltingly after me, as we lurched along the bombed roads of Normandy to the little cluster of brown tents just established inland from the heavily shelled beach area near Caen, where I was working.

3. "My Father's house" and the certainty of heaven for all who trust in Christ comes in verses 2 and 3, with the promise that Christ Jesus will receive us to be with him. Heaven is seen as the home of Jesus, prepared by him for us, and is able to be understood by a sick man whose mental grasp may be slowed down by his serious illness, and who needs truth given him simply and clearly.

4. The question "How can we know?" (v. 5) is answered by the total provision of Christ as way, truth and life, with his exclusive claim that we can only come to God through Christ.

Slowly I showed this to Charlie, and got him to repeat again, "It's trusting Jesus, and trusting him *all*

the way." I wrote John 14:6 on a card in capital letters for him to have by his hospital bed.

When people are dying I concentrate on the fact of Christ's Cross and Resurrection, with this emphasis: 1. Jesus loves you, because he died for you (Rom. 5:8). 2. Jesus bore your sins (I Pet. 3:18). 3. Jesus rose again, to be a living Saviour, and so can be your friend now, and the Lord of life who gives you eternal life now, and so a welcome to heaven when God calls you. I concentrate, secondly, on the steps to Christ, such as Mark 1:15-17 ("Repent . . . Believe . . . Come") and leave them with my small booklet, *"How Can I Accept Christ,"* and help them to take the decisive step of committal to Christ.

Each day I visited Charlie and he would say with me, "It's trusting Jesus, and trusting him all the way." On Sunday he was very close to death, but still con-

scious; and I can remember him saying, "I've been saying my prayers today, Padre," and we talked again about John 14:6 and "trusting Jesus *all the way.*" Later that day he died, as I believe, in the faith of Christ, and I and the peasant people near the hospital tents brought red roses for his simple funeral under the blue Normandy sky with the white vapour trails crossing and recrossing far above us. The great sentences of hope took on a new meaning as I remembered Charlie slowly finding his way to the Lord Jesus in the last days of his young life.

"I am the resurrection and the life," saith the Lord. "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

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# The World's Most Crowded Freeway

C. RALSTON SMITH

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil (Ps. 23:4).*

On the east side of the Hudson River some scaffolding was being erected beneath the George Washington Bridge. It had been necessary to double the capacity of the structure in order to support the heavy traffic passing from the North Jersey towns into Manhattan. They were going to swing under the present roadway a duplicate highway having eight more lines of traffic, flowing one way at one level and the opposite way at the other level. "The most crowded highway in all the world," someone had remarked. I thought of that, and considered for a moment another highway which is infinitely more crowded than any other in all the world. That highway is death.

We are told that someone dies every eight seconds. That means that since you read the last sentence someone has closed out his account in this life to face God's judgment in the next. Death is a part of life. And we fool ourselves if we think that we can escape the necessity of contemplating it. But this is a reality, unique and

impossible to escape. Louis XV of France is said to have forbade mention of the word "death" in his presence. He was to have punished anyone who brought morose thoughts to his attention or marred the tranquility of his mind. But Thomas Carlyle, commenting upon his unusual trait, described the monarch as an ostrich, sticking its head into the sand, and forgetting that the rest of its body is still exposed to reality.

Two friends met in the shadow of a woods. One was heir to the throne of Israel. The other had to that time been the favored ward at court. David had sensed Saul's rising hatred toward him and had fled the palace. His friend, Prince Jonathan, had come to woo him back into the company of the court. Minimizing the latter's danger, Jonathan said to David, "You will be missed, for your seat will be empty. Besides, I think you exaggerate this danger. My father will forget his anger and jealousy. Surely, there should be nothing to this of which you are afraid." But David replied, "Truly as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death" (I Sam. 20:3).

From the lips of David we have another utterance concerning death which might well be included as a part of the Apostle's Creed: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear

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no evil for Thou art with me" (Psa. 23:4). Here we have a right attitude toward death; not a minimization of its reality, and not quaking at the sign of its approach.

Death comes to every man, pulling kings from their thrones, snuffing out the candle of old age, plucking out the bloom from the soil of humanity, and separating the most intimate of companions. Death is no respecter of persons. "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Heb. 9:27), and few universal experiences are so unfathomable. Men have contemplated death from different viewpoints. Their concern about it, or their comfort, as the case may be, has depended upon their personal relationship to God. Two men may approach the problem from different angles. Robert Ingersoll, an agnostic for instance, having been grieved by what seemed to him the untimely death of a younger brother, wrote this:

Yet after all it may be best just in the happiest sunniest hour of all the voyage, when eager winds are kissing every sail, to dash against the unseen rock and in an instant hear the billows roar above a sunken ship. For whether in midsea or among the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck at last must mark the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its hour is rich with love and every moment jeweled with joy, will, at its close become a tragedy as sad and deep and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death.

This is a view of death without hope. On the other side, there are those who have seen its horizon as a light of hope, and have seen that "enemy" as a liberator of the human spirit. This was the attitude of the poet Shelley when he wrote concerning the death of Keats:

*He hath outsoared the shadow of our night;  
Envy and calumny and hate and pain  
And that unrest which men miscall delight,  
Can touch him not and torture not again;  
From the contagion of the world's slow stain  
He is secure, and now can never mourn  
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in vain;  
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to turn  
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.*

These are two views of death. Scientists say that man is born to die. "From the moment of his conception he has within him the germs that will bring about his ultimate dissolution." Any comfort? The fact that we must die is not a cheerful thought.

#### LIFE WITHOUT TERROR

What then should be our view of death? I believe that we ought so to live that death will hold no terror for us. We ought to know that one day, how soon one cannot say, we shall be called to give account to God of the deeds done in the body. So it is that we live now in the light of eternity. But how are we to greet this herald of eternity which comes to take from us our loved ones?

We might thank God, first, for memories, the by-products of intimate association. Rather than murmur

against God and growl in bitterness as though he were indebted to us, to giving us the life and love of our fellow mortals, we ought rather to consider that if we have enjoyed love and known companionship, we are debtors to God. We have received at his hand more than we deserve. Woe and grief that is overdone is simply the wailing of a human spirit which knows that opportunity for doing good to this soul is now gone forever. Remorse that seizes our spirits and torments them is remorse over what might have been and now can never be.

By way of another consideration, we might see in death a testimony of the brevity of life. Never can we pass before a bier but that we are reminded that life is but a vapor. Therefore to us is the command, "redeem the time, for the night cometh when no man can work."

We ought to see, also, that in the death of a loved one, we have the opportunity to witness to the grace of God which he bestows upon us in times of trial.

#### THE HALLS OF HEAVEN

Finally, if death snatches from you your loved ones and challenges your Christian faith, you have the support of the "good news" concerning Jesus Christ that he hath led captivity captive and hath been made victor over the last enemy of the soul which is death. Those who know him not, face a sunless horizon. Those who have put their trust in him have strength for the time of need. "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). This is the hope of the Christian. Not that he is to wait for death, but that he labors where he is until that time.

David had taken off his royal robes and wrapped himself in sackcloth. Out beyond the palace, he sat among ashes praying for his son of Bathsheba, weeping that perchance his own sins had brought sickness upon the boy. Reports would come to him frequently from the court physician. Then came the news: "Your son is dead." With that he arose, returned into the palace, bathed himself, and put on perfumes and silken garments. As he ascended the throne, the people of court were astonished. "What sort of action is this?" they asked. David replied, "He cannot come to me, but I can go to him." And he continued to pursue the work before him, ready all the while for the time when God should call him from his tasks.

The Christian need never be the victim of death. Death, to him, means a messenger from eternity, come to open the halls of heaven. And though the corridor through which God leads one may be dark, it opens into a broad, resplendent mansion where he who has conquered death awaits. In his presence there is joy, and at his right hand, pleasures forevermore.

END

# A LAYMAN and his Faith

## DELINQUENCY—THERE IS A CAUSE

ONE OF THE MOST ABSURD statements man ever made is recorded in Exodus 32. Moses had gone up on Mt. Sinai to receive a revelation of God's divine law. His brother Aaron was left in charge of the camp of Israel. But the people soon became restive and demanded man-made gods to lead them. Their personal jewelry made of gold was collected for the purpose, after which Aaron melted it and fashioned it into a calf. This the people worshipped with the abandon of pagans.

Coming down from the mountain, Moses heard the tumult and then saw the revelry and the idolatrous rites. In a rage of righteous indignation he cast down the tablets containing the Ten Commandments and demanded of Aaron: "What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?"

Aaron's reply is a classic of evasion and puerility: "They said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it to me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf."

¶ Americans in general — sociologists, psychologists, penologists, churchmen, and parents—all are becoming alarmed over the problem of juvenile delinquency that is evidencing itself in wanton destruction of property, crimes of violence and general lawlessness.

Americans, too, are a foolish people. Behind the loud cries of anguish and dismay may be heard the voice of Aaron speaking more than three millenniums ago, ". . . and there came out this calf." We are being shocked by the effects and facts of the situation, but in large measure we are unwilling to face the cause, and until we do there can be no adequate solution.

Why this alarming increase in juvenile crime? In one day recently the newspapers carried three stories of teen-agers who had shot and killed their parents over trivialities. Robbery, rape, theft, vandalism are all crimes for which juveniles are being apprehended in increasing numbers. The entire gamut of crime is covered by these young people at an annual rate increase of about 9 per cent.

In fact, the official statistics are so alarming that drastic steps are needed immediately.

¶ Long ago physicians joined together to face the *cause* of diseases and then to discover and use appropriate means to overcome them. This social cancer that is sweeping America demands a similar realistic approach. For too long we have been concerned with symptoms rather than the *cause*.

Juvenile delinquency does not just happen. That it comes from adult delinquency is true, but here again adults are often unaware of the multiple ways in which they themselves contribute to the waywardness of young people. There are unquestionably causes in the home—lack of discipline and control on the one hand, and wrong-doing on the part of parents that the children see and imitate.

There are several contributing causes to juvenile delinquency that cry out to be faced, and for which preventive steps need to be taken.

¶ Every child in a home where there is a TV set ("That monster in the living room"), is having violence impressed on his mind and heart. Program after program shows fighting, lawlessness and death. Immature minds do not distinguish between acting and reality, between fake and fact. That people who have depicted violence walk away from the scene as soon as the cameras are turned off is not appreciated by these young viewers. Similar episodes are enacted on many radio programs, although their effect is less pernicious because they are only heard, not seen. While we wonder why and deplore juvenile crime, a very real cause is being ignored: ". . . and there came out this calf."

Unassailable evidence can be produced that many TV and radio programs, many movies, the misnamed "comics" and the filthy literature sold at the average newsstand and bookstore all portray crime, violence, lust and evil in general, in ways that glorify and glamorize sin. And yet we blandly say, ". . . and there came out this calf."

¶ The concern of Americans today is that a solution be found, but are we not adding fuel to the fire? In the face of sex obsession there are demands for more

"sex education." In the face of lawlessness there is a softening of law enforcement. In the face of conditions that foster delinquency there is more emphasis on housing than on homes, on recreation than on work, on juvenile courts than on parental discipline.

A surgeon faced with cancer will never settle for palliative measures when the disease itself may be eradicated. In this grave social emergency no less drastic steps should be considered.

The problem must be approached from two directions—the immediate and the ultimate, corrective and preventive measures.

Christians realize that the eventual solution of spiritual and moral problems rests in changed hearts and lives, and they know that only Christ can do this. Reform without redemption is but cleaning the outside of the cup, or embellishing the tombs of the dead. New creatures in Christ take their place in society and, according to our Lord, become its "light" and its "salt." Therefore, a long-range program is only realistic as it works in keeping with God's plan for the redemption of mankind.

¶ Along with the Gospel message there are steps which need to be taken immediately, steps which will act as deterrents in the present situation and which are completely in keeping with the Christian approach. Drastic action is needed and an aroused and concerned citizenry can and should initiate something along this line:

Parents should be made financially responsible for property losses inflicted by their minor children, whether by acts of vandalism or general carelessness.

Parents should unite in boycotting the sponsors of TV and radio programs that portray crime and violence for their children to see and hear.

Responsible adults, parents and otherwise, should unite in demanding that the filth now sold as "comics," along with other salacious literature, be abolished from our newsstands. Lawmakers and enforcement officials may have difficulty in deciding what is "obscene," but they are acutely sensitive to votes and to the moral sensitiveness of voters.

Hollywood should learn that crime does not pay, even when shown in magic color and on wide screens. Surely there are interesting, entertaining and elevating things in unending quantity and quality that lend themselves to TV, radio and screen portrayal. Unless there is a drastic change, these avenues of entertainment will con- (Cont'd on page 39)

# THE PAGANIZING OF LOVE

Love is losing face in the twentieth century. The communist philosophy of world domination feeds on strife and hatred; Anglo-Saxon humanism espouses a cosmos indifferent, even unfriendly, to values and human concerns. Many young people equate or mistake a counterfeit license and lust as love.

To understand love, particularly God's love for sinners, seems out of keeping in an age when its embodiment is Marilyn Monroe on a calendar, not Jesus on a cross. Deterioration of *agape* to *eros* has again snared "love" in the sordid quagmires of paganism.

Contemporary literature often belittles faithfulness in love. By contrast, promiscuity secures explicit as well as implicit approval. To overthrow or disregard traditional mores stamps the modern lover as truly sophisticated and contemporary, as progressive over the "prejudiced illusions" of earlier generations. To pledge oneself to another in an absolute and final commitment of body and soul is considered a waste and folly. "One-woman, one-man saintliness" is unknown in today's triangular heartbeat. Because modern man and woman are considered incapable of an exclusive unilateral devotion, love becomes a thing "for the moment," a spark to fan or snuff as momentary impulses or instincts dictate.

In the darkness of thwarted and crushed inherited values, young hearts pound wildly in the fogs of romanticism. Only feeble, if any, explanations of conduct are forthcoming.

The price of this eroticism to our youth is unquestionably staggering. Premature aging of flesh and spirit, loss of vitality rob those too much "in a hurry to live." Experiences purely physical in character and significance impoverish and bankrupt life with eventual feelings of failure and frustration amid the gloom of daily "realities." Disorderly and frantic pseudo-love destroys the balanced equilibrium between realism and romanticism and for the challenge of adventure in private life substitutes a harrowing confusion. Moreover, its practice saps the very enthusiasm for life; modern *eros* knows nothing of the chastity for which the heart intermittently yearns. *Eros* rather has sullied love's sacred treasures, thereby defacing and tarnishing the beauty of love's adventures.

reveals emotional involvement but at the same time betrays little comprehension of the problems basic to such emotions. Reluctant to admit true love's demise, in fact, even its existence (since marriage itself is merely a formal thing), the emotionally torn person may simply flee from any rational explanation of life. Daily existence therefore becomes a kind of fate to which one succumbs, a doom where the joys of life and love degenerate to boredom and resignation. It may be argued, perhaps, that the first warm feelings of such ill-destined love were really genuine. This is difficult to accept in good conscience, however. Some explain or solve the bitterness of a "resigned" marriage by repudiating the reality of love itself. Sickened by the shame of failure, overwhelmed by revulsion and even mistrust, unhappy marriage partners can only feel themselves hopelessly shackled. Perfect love becomes an illusion, the durability of anything a doubt, and all fixed values dishonest or faked. Is it not unthinkable that two people living together in such tension could concede the moral indestructibility of marriage, and yet at one and the same time not wish for "a miracle," or long for the "final break"?

This description betrays something of the corrosive despair that undermines romance in multitudes of modern homes. These chilling tensions threaten the disillusioned who think only horizontally in trying to alleviate their troubles. There is no thought of God and his precepts, only a longing, perhaps, for some "word," the hopeful counsel of some friend, a psychiatrist's suggestion, not the *Word* which bridges the chasm of sin. Resorting to a "third party" is actually an unwitting acknowledgment that successful marriage is never a "closed corporation," that an additional personality is essential to save two others from boredom. There is no recognition, however, that only the Divine Person can bind human life with unity of purpose, that only spiritual experience can exalt and balance the elemental longings of the soul. That sex in modern marriage should be so shrouded with disenchantment that neither religion, morality nor the discipline of reason may pierce it, is indeed unfortunate. Sex becomes merely an alloy of love that neither yields to prayer nor strives for purity. It has no sense of guilt, no interest in forgiveness, and no identification with eternal things. Such love is unworthy even for an

Bereavement over the death of love, that is, realization of a dead romance and dead marriage, indeed

enemy, much less fashioned for a mate.

These facts may explain why marriage and the home have become houses of silent conflict and intolerable suffering. Those once bound but now parted in heart know the haunting shadows that dim life's reveries, the pain that wracks every nerve and fibre of being. The hollow chatter that first concealed, then revealed, a dying marriage gives way to long silences. Tenderness vanishes, sympathy fades, living together is merely an empty social myth. Love which perseveres merely as a duty yields eventually to inner defiance, to emotional claustrophobia that frequently escapes through deceit. Jealousy between two partners may momentarily quicken a jaded companionship. What little still remains of love on the part of either may revive at the intrusion of a third party. But if one or the other concedes to furtive lust, the fight for fidelity is lost.

Often couples who experience marital failures in the home enjoy vocational success in the world. One or both mates may find in a career a cover or compensation for their defeat, a concealment or balance for the threadbare marriage which plagues them. Innumerable forms of diversion, e.g., the love of achievement, the love of money, even the love of art or learning, become substitutes for a lost faith in love.

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To alleviate, let alone solve, the problem of loveless paganism that scars our cities, even some of our churches, is no easy assignment. More is involved than simply transforming impoverished marriages. Faith must be vindicated in the objective significance of love as cosmic reality, and, even more basic, in the holy God who is himself the essence of love and who ordains the ultimate triumph of righteous love over any and all opposition. Christianity, to restore faith to the life of romance, to exhibit the power of love as life-giving in contrast to life-grasping, needs the renewed practice of these principles by its adherents under divine motivation for eternal purposes. Recognizing the living God's entrance into the circumference of human shame to display limitless love at Calvary, the Christian knows that true *agape* among men and to God exists only as the Holy Spirit's gift (Gal. 5:22). Pure love is not man-made but a divinely accomplished virtue. To know an eternal society of righteous love abounds within the Godhead, to acknowledge that he is created by God for fellowship in holy love, to accept responsibility as his neighbor's keeper (particularly in the realm and privileges of the home)—these alone can gird the individual and the Church to effectively resist the onslaughts of pagan thought and practice in our day. With its vindication of love as eternal, valid reality, only the Gospel of Christ can restore lasting order into modern confusion. Such love implies sacrificial

self-giving and obedience of all the commandments. From such love issues the cohesive force to fuse and to feed all family members into a mutuality of experiences.

The modern social sciences fight the diseases of love quite differently. For them divorce made easy and accepted is the best alternative to and remedy for continued lovelessness in modern life.

Unfortunately, even churches have supported this approach. The tragic fact of many unhappy and broken homes among professing Christians betrays not only the neglect of spiritual resources for human happiness, because of men and women who live the lie of empty Christian profession, but "gives the lie" to the Church's high call of holy living. Can the Church continue to talk of love while its members so seldom practice its rewarding disciplines? Love is the Christian fulfillment of spiritual comprehension and apprehension.

The Bible's one basic message to the marital turmoil of our day is that *eros* must yield to the miracle of *agape*. Only the supernaturally regenerated life may see the perspective and feel the vitality of super-love, whose expression of thought, will and emotion is self-giving rather than self-seeking, forgiving rather than condemning. Love in truth and truth in love throb only from the approximated heartbeat of the Creator-Redeemer. Such love is assured final triumph through alignment with the supernatural. Its birth and growth stem in communion with God, and, identified in the Cross, *agape*-love partakes of infinity and eternity.

Until man knows this love, his being yearns restlessly for fulfillment and satisfaction. Until he touches Calvary, romance and marriage are incomplete. To touch glory, love must be reborn at the Cross. To the Church, therefore, is given the unique solution for today's problems of sex and love. Its Gospel offers not only composure and tranquility to meet trials and temptations, it offers an altered daily expression and experience of life through the rediscovery of grace. The Church can disclose and demonstrate marriage as a union of mind and spirit as well as of body. By leading man to the fount of eternal love and life, the Church may restore marriage and the intimacies of the home to their orbit of intended spiritual significance.

#### SUMMIT TALKS—USEFUL OR COMMUNIST TRAP?

Some observers have felt our national leaders to be derelict in not accepting any and all invitations for summit or other conferences with Russia.

But here are some absorbing facts. We have engaged in summit and ministerial level talks. What were the results? Since 1943 there have been four

summit talks with Russia during which 24 major agreements were reached. Russia violated 23 of the 24. During the same time our secretaries of state have conducted six conferences with Soviet foreign ministers. At these conferences 16 major agreements were made. Of that number Russia violated 14.

With such a record more conferences would seem futile. Agreements that are kept only unilaterally are traps and hindrances, not diplomatic triumphs. These meetings are used by Russia for propaganda purposes and, more serious still, they have been used to buy

time to continue their work of infiltration, subversion and indoctrination, all designed for and working toward world domination.

Historians of the next generation (should there be any) may well marvel at the apparent stupidity of the Western nations after World War II. Plainly warned as to Russia's intentions, they have gone blithely forward, apparently oblivious of Russia's plans, and permitting those plans to develop and mature while they optimistically looked the other way.

The question is: Have we yet learned this lesson?

# The Threshing Floor of Atad

S. S. LAPPIN

**A**nd they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation, and he [Joseph] made a mourning for his father seven days."

The account of Genesis 50:10 is the story of the death of a parent, a Patriarch who had given to his children the blessings of a nation. And it is the scene of a passionate and most beautiful reunion among lost and almost forgotten members of a great family.

Joseph and the others of his family had been in Egypt before this occasion; but at the request of Jacob, he and the other sons had taken the father back to the homeland for burial. They had left behind the "little ones and the flocks and herds," in the land of Goshen, and Joseph, leader of the group, had taken with him "all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt." But when at last they entered the borders of Canaan, they stopped at a level spot of ground called the threshing floor of Atad, and there together they mourned and wept.

## REUNION IN BEREAVEMENT

What a season of reunion, repentance, reminiscence and regret that must have been. The eventful life of Jacob had come to a quiet close. And the days of the years of his sojourning had been a hundred and thirty years. But what years! "Few and evil have been the days of my life," he had said. Self-centeredness and re-

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gretfulness in youth, unhallowed dealings with Esau his brother, questionable business practices in later life, and that mysterious night of wrestling with the angel and meeting defeat; that reconciliation with Esau, and those ceaseless quarrels and intrigues of a large family, two mothers and the jealousies between their sons—and in all these relations, he had shown preference and partiality rather than justice even among his own. But notwithstanding all this, his name had been changed from Jacob (supplanter) to Israel (prince with God), and the priceless heritage of the covenant with Abraham had been committed to him.

## THE INFLUENCE OF JACOB

To the moment of his last breath, he had held sacred the traditions of an honored ancestry. Beginning with Reuben, his firstborn, and on to Joseph and Benjamin, Jacob had spoken prophetic words and affectionate blessings. And then, "when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people."

What recollections, what suppressed emotions, what agony of heart and self-reproach must have been theirs as they had made their slow return over the wilderness way! What a contrast—the inward emotions of twelve men going "back home" to bury father, to the outward pomp and pageantry which they had known among Egyptian nobility. But pent-up grief and remorse must presently have time and place for expression. And so, after crossing the border into the homeland, they came to the threshing floor of Atad, and there they paused and "mourned with a great and very sore lamentation."

This was not the end, however, of Jacob. He was now Israel and father of that distinguished race, "the children of Israel." And though he was embalmed and ready for interment, he was but to make his way through the generations of the covenant down the centuries of time. Not one of the mourners at the threshing floor could have sensed the far-reaching significance of Jacob's blessings and prophecies, nor even have imagined what the goal of their own future journeyings might be. And we cannot fathom, even today, the meaning or mystery of these things.

Truly, says the psalmist, "The lord hath chosen Jacob," but truly, declares the writer of Hebrews, "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." The deep distress of that pause at the threshing floor was but a forecast. Nehemiah, yet to be born, would "sit down and weep certain days over the desolation of Zion." There would be "a voice from Ramah, Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted for they were not." The hymn of a later day would recall how the exiled remnant, their harps hung on the willows by Chebar, "wept when they remembered Zion by the rivers of Babylon." Like David and his followers at the ruined city of Ziklag, the strange pilgrimage as they have come down the centuries "have wept until they have no power to weep more." And wandering tourists may still see today the "wailing wall" at Jerusalem.

There is no end, even yet, of that sorrowful procession. What Longfellow wrote of the nameless dead in the Jewish Cemetery at Newport has ever been and still is true of that noble race:

*Pride and humiliation, hand in hand  
Walked with them, through the world  
where 'ere they went,  
Trampled and beaten as the sand  
And yet unshaken as the continent  
All their lives long with un-  
leavened bread  
And bitter herbs of exile and its fears  
The wasting famine of the heart they fed,  
And slaked its thirst with the Marah of their tears.*

It was the Apostle Paul, "an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin," who said, "if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." The distinguishing characteristic of Abraham was his faith. Little did it matter, the racial relation or family blood tie, the physical characteristics or ritual performances. The true children of Israel were to be known by a trusting faith in God, a faith like that of Abraham who "believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness."

#### DEATH AND GOD'S PROVIDENCE

One wonders, does that inheritance to sonship in Christ carry with it disciplines as well as blessings from God in the attaining of a glorious destiny? Can it be that

even death and its sombre shadows has a place in the providence of God? Must the "household of faith" bear its portion also of the sorrows which were suffered by that ancient family at Atad? Are human families held together by hardships and heartaches as well as by natural affection and seasons of joy?

Certain it is that in the present world order every household comes some time or another to its day of weeping and then to after-days of melancholic reflection. Father goes from us, or mother it may be, or others whose lives have been intertwined with ours by nature or by deeper ties of friendship. We had not thought it could happen to us. But it has been happening all around us, and we have been so busy or so occupied with our own interests that we have not paid heed until too late. How differently would we have done had we but known and understood those crises that come to life. Hitherto our vision has been obscured in petty things; now we begin to discern, though dimly still, life's hidden and mysterious meanings.

#### MEMORY OF A GREAT PAST

Pausing at the threshing floor, as death requires each family to do from time to time, there suddenly comes to memory deeds of past days. We see that elder brother in his true stature now, and we recall how his kindly counsel was so ruthlessly set aside. And then we remember our passionate desires to retaliate or "get even." How senseless, how puerile, and how needless they all were! Father and mother—what pains and anxieties we caused them. In the midst of their busy lives, they were but seeking to pass on to us the treasures of righteousness and integrity. And we, the "chosen seed of Israel's race" had not understood them then, but now with our hearts made tender by bereavement, we see what they meant.

Two men, brothers who had prospered abundantly in the world, returned home to bury their aged father. They were to divide the old farm and build their dream houses, each on the allotted acreage as they had previously planned. The old house was to be torn down, and the two of them were busily engaged at work.

"See here," said the one inside to the other outside, "see how thin these floor boards are by the fireplace?"

"Why is that, I wonder," said the other, coming in.

"It is where father used to sit in his rocking chair reading the Bible."

There was a stillness between them for some moments, and then, in the midst of the rubble and wreckage, one of them spoke . . .

"John," he said in a hushed voice, "we ought to kneel here. We ought to give thanks for such a father as we had and pledge ourselves as we've not done before to the service of his God."

The two of them knelt together, and in reverence

they prayed for the first time in their adult lives to God in the name of the Christ whom their father had tried to serve.

#### THRESHOLD OF THE UNSEEN

We today see much by way of backward glance. We are joint-heirs with that ancient family to the treasure of faith which they were to bear back from Egypt to "Canaan, beyond Jordan." To that strange camping party, death had been but a tragic pause on the long and sorrowful journey of a Syrian family back to the homeland and family burial place. But it also had been a promise and purpose of God, unrevealed to them and perhaps to us even now. We are ever moving slowly and toward an unseen glorious goal. And by means of our humble workaday lives, we are moving there even in spite of petty human faults and failure. Truly the ways of God are past finding out:

*We have but faith—we cannot know,  
For knowledge is of things we see,  
And yet we trust it comes from Thee  
A beam in darkness; let it grow.*

What simplicity of life had these pastoral peoples of long ago! How natural to us, even in our day, were their human impulses, their jealousies, their enduring rancors, and their attempted retaliations! Still, underneath all these, was a faith and a love, a spiritual compassion given them by God when man "became a living soul." And such power of tenderness in Jacob's family, such power of faith and love which they expressed is in our families and ourselves when we exercise it, believe, and have the patience to wait upon God. We live on the threshold of an unseen world of which we are only dimly conscious. We cannot pass the mystic border line now, though we can come near. And we do come near when we push aside the distractions and confusions of this world to come to the threshing floor of Atad and mourn together for one we love. We need death; we need to see the still form, the closed eyes, and the folded hands of some dear one, for it restores to us our own kinship and a consciousness of that other life.

This life, we know, is like a passing cloud. Shall we ever see it again? Or it is like a shepherd's tent, set up yesterday and taken down today. Will it ever be set up again? A tree cut down may sprout again and grow, but if a man die will he live again? David said, after his child had died, "He cannot come to me, but I can go to him."

Perhaps then, it was a design of God's, that when we saw death we would see more clearly life. Or that by the terrible "awakening" shock of death we might better come to know those about us and even ourselves. Sorrow reveals the depth of our natures; and, though fitting tributes and prayers, flowers and music may be

but little consolation in moments like these, we loved ones who follow toward that grave in pleasant weather will be to each other effectual and sustaining strength in meditative after-days. At the threshing floor of Atad, we do not know the things to come in days ahead. But thank God, none of us again will ever be the same. Death and mourning have touched our spirits. And in the providence of a wise Creator, this is what we needed. "Weeping may endure for the night but joy cometh in the morning."

#### DAWN OF A NEW DAY

But centuries pass now since that incident at Atad, and the world sees the dawn of a new day. The kingdom of God has come at hand. Someone is walking by. He pauses, caresses a wayside flower, and then notices a little bird obviously trodden under foot. For a moment there he gives loving attention to these last and least of creations. But a little later, he is taking over and restoring to life the limp form of a little maid. At another time he is stopping a funeral procession and sending a weeping widow home with a son reclaimed to life. One who himself weeps at the grave of his friend Lazarus, proceeds to call that one forth from the tomb and then turn to comfort the others who weep. And, miracle of miracles, this same Man voluntarily lays down his own life and after three days takes it up again!

#### DEATH WILL BE CONQUERED

Blessed prospect! When the day comes that all nations will have heard this gospel of the kingdom of God, then we shall see "the end" (of an age). Then we shall remember no more the threshing floor of Atad. That will all be forgotten, for the last enemy, death, will have been forever destroyed. And "a great voice out of heaven" (Rev. 21:3) will cry, "Behold, I make all things new!" (Rev. 21:5) . . . "the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God . . . and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:3-4).

And for those of us who live and dwell in the time between Jacob and that day to come, we have the assurance that "I am the resurrection and the life and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25). "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (I Thess. 4:14). ". . . then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory" (I Cor. 15:54-55)?

# EUTYCHUS and his kin

## VALENTINE BOUQUET

A rash of comic valentines has appeared at the Market Square Church. Results were unfortunate. These samples show the danger of such a practice:

### For Our Preacher

I do not love thee, Dr. Fell,  
The reason why I cannot tell,  
But this I know, and know full well,  
I get a headache when you yell.

### S. S. Teacher's Reproof

"Johnny Pistol, I declare  
You've cut a curl from Annie's hair,  
Carved initials in your chair,  
And while I glared in your direction,  
Put bubble gum in our collection!  
If you don't stop, you shall not  
have your  
Big gold star for best behavior!"

### To Our Electronic Organist

With calm deliberation  
you make your preparation  
Depress the little stops . . .  
and Whoom! the detonation!  
How can you keep your balance,  
serenity, and poise,  
While stomping on the pedals  
that booming bass of noise?  
Your grand fortissimo piles  
the decibels in cubes;  
What supersonic sock  
from the vacuum in tubes!  
For a plaque above your organ  
we bring this metal casting.  
We found it by the roadside;  
it says, *Beware of Blasting!*

### The Ushers

The marching file moves in style  
Down the aisle  
In smooth formation. Each carnation  
As punctuation  
Bobs as one. The offering done,  
With crisp precision now retiring  
And quite aloof from eyes admiring  
They slip into a narthex pew  
Hid from view,  
And there they shed the manner  
formal  
Endure the sermon as is normal  
With yawns and whispers, nods and  
giggles  
Some gossip, titters, coughs and  
wiggles,  
Each polished dandy munching candy.  
This is the preacher's heart's desire—  
To hush the ushers and the choir!

EUTYCHUS

## HOLLYWOOD AND BABYLON

The Halverson article, "Any Good—from Hollywood?" (Dec. 23 issue), is a statement in favor of a qualified recognition of the movies. Stephen W. Paine in *The Christian and the Movies* (Eerdman's, 1957) presents the indictment. . . .

JOHN H. GERSTNER

Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Prof. Gerstner has done a service in his excellent review of the movie discussions from Catholic and Protestant points of view, by Fathers Kelly and Ford and by Prof. Boyd.

The Catholics point out with some justification that the Legion of Decency has since 1934 exerted a considerable amount of influence upon the movies, while the Protestant slant, as represented in the article by Prof. Boyd of Union Theological Seminary in New York, is that there are many fine lessons to be learned from the movies in general, lessons having "Christian relevance." These lessons are often conveyed "by negative witness" as the "loneliness and sorrow of secular life" are shown, and perhaps these lessons would be perceived only by the very thoughtful, and in the case under study by "not more than one out of a hundred."

In the Boyd article, mention is made of the film *Lust for Life*, portraying the life of the great painter Vincent Van Gogh. Although the film devotes quite a bit of attention to Van Gogh's life with his mistress who was a former prostitute, has a scene in a brothel, and portrays extensive drinking and "uncontrolled emotion," yet it is seen as doing a service containing, as it is said, "genuine religious insights and pointing to values beyond itself." Much as it might be argued that one who has plumbed the depths of sin has, in a negative sort of way, learned many valuable spiritual lessons, I feel sure that at least some readers of CHRISTIANITY TODAY wished that mention could have been made of another point of view on commercialized movies, namely, that the institutionalized entertainment movie inflicts untold moral damage upon society, that because of its necessary dependence upon the degraded, unregenerate tastes of our times this con-

dition has no promise of remedy (despite what some have for years regarded as hopeful counter-currents, i.e., the Legion of Decency), and that Christians should therefore withhold the financial support and approval implied in their attendance at even so-called "good movies."

The movie audience includes each week some 18.5 million minors (37 per cent of the total) of whom 7.5 million are under 14 years of age. In studying the sociological affects of the movies, the Motion Picture Research Council found that in the group of reformatory boys under study, 55 per cent indicated that pictures of gangsters and gunplay had stirred in them a desire to "make a lot of money easily," and in a group of delinquents aged 15 or under, 17 per cent indicated that movies had influenced them "to do something wrong." Furthermore, the answers of the boys actually mentioned a total of 32 important items of crime technique which they had learned from the movies.

Speaking of sex delinquency, the MPRC investigators queried a sizeable grouping of delinquent girls. Their findings revealed that while 72 per cent of these deviates felt they had improved their attractiveness by imitating the movies, nearly 40 per cent admitted they were moved to invite men to make love to them after seeing passionate sex pictures.

All this is in spite of the industry's own code and the pressures of the Legion of Decency, whose approach is of necessity a somewhat legalistic approach. Details like miscegenation, profanity, and mercy killing are bartered and traded between the industry and critical agencies. It is difficult, if not impossible, to legislate against a "spirit," or a "moral climate." You cannot by a set of rules keep the great movie-going public from getting the type of films it wants.

One film writer, discussing this, complains, "The moguls have as yet been unable to cater to this great box-office yen for immorality," but he adds quickly that ways to evade the code are always being found. "The movie makers have not been too stymied by this part of their self-imposed curbs. They have learned how to hint at fornication in a hundred masterful ways." Much more could be said, of course. Against this background many

Christians feel that the commands of scripture enjoining separation from the world-spirit, and warning against being unequally yoked with unbelievers, would seem to call for a policy of abstinence from the commercialized entertainment movie.

Houghton College STEPHEN W. PAINE  
Houghton, N. Y. President

It is good to read an article which does not start out to make a whipping boy of Hollywood, although I thought I detected a concession that movies are not per se evil, which to me was condescending.

Hollywood has much to recommend it to the intelligent man. Whatever else might be said about it, there is, at least, a concerted effort to adjust its material to certain moral standards, which at the minimum would reflect the basic laws of the Ten Commandments, and which sometimes soars considerably beyond this.

One has only to compare the product of other branches of the entertainment world with what appears on the screen to see this in the concrete. A current example would be the extremely popular picture *Peyton Place*. Is there any need to recall the fuss that was made about the novel from which this picture was derived?

Another fairly obvious example would be *Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison*, which, of course, could have been vulgar beyond description. Consider also the quality of some of the material on the so-called legitimate stage, as well as the contents of many of the foreign films imported into this country, and you will readily get the idea that while all is not perfect here, nor as lofty as some earnest souls might want it to be, it is still not Babylon by any means. . . .

JACK VIZZARD  
Motion Picture Assn. of America  
Production Code Administration  
Hollywood, Calif.

• The Hollywood road runs nearer Babylon than Sinai. *Time Magazine's* cinema editor remarks: "There is still too much meaningless blood and lust in *Peyton Place*" (Jan. 6 issue). Yet the camera and cinema are not intrinsically evil. And every sincere effort to bring them within the orbit of Christ's lordship has value. The Production Code may stop short, but a code is a code.—ED.

#### THE CHURCH IN RUSSIA

The first article by Henlee H. Barnette (Dec. 23 issue) relates a story, gotten at third or fourth hand, about a Christian who answered the communist counterblast with the word, "Christ is risen." I first read that story about 20 years ago.

Then it was in a small village on Easter Day, and the Commissar had gathered the peasants together to indoctrinate them with the communist ideology. After he had finished he asked if anyone wanted to say anything. One man got up and said, Yes. The Commissar said, Make it short. He stepped to the platform and said, "Christ is risen." His fellow-peasants answered with one voice, "He is risen, indeed." That has the ring of probability and truthfulness. That little incident has grown until now it is 40,000 that answer with one voice. Which is a very improbable happening indeed.

WALTER McCARROLL  
California Christian Citizens Assn.  
Los Angeles, Calif.

• Prof. Barnette of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary faculty, author of the article "The Church in Soviet Russia," comments: "Could it not possibly have happened in 1940 on a larger scale? . . . Note that I cite the famous theologian Emil Brunner as my source for the story (cf. *The Great Invitation*, pp. 74-75). I do not believe that Dr. Brunner embellished the story enough to seriously mar its truth."—ED.

Your . . . article . . . is the line which the Reds want us to accept concerning the church in Russia. . . .

CARL MCINTIRE, President  
Intl. Council of Christian Churches  
Collingswood, N. J.

#### EVOLUTION AND UNBELIEF

J. H. Ward is right ("Unbelief Today," Jan. 6 issue). Mussolini, Bismarck, Hitler, Stalin all used the same naturalistic-evolutionistic base to build on. But we, stupidly, do not see it. . . . When a magazine with the might, power, wealth and influence of science behind it—such as the *Scientific Monthly*—can give ten pages against any temptation to even consider supernaturalism, as its November issue did, then the Church of Christ had better wake up. . . .

LERoy VICTOR CLEVELAND  
Anti-Evolution Compendium  
Henniker, N. H.

#### VIRGIN BIRTH AFTERTHOUGHT

I have been rather amazed at the rejection of the Virgin Birth of Jesus by certain of your correspondents but even more amazed at the reasoning by which they arrive at their conclusions.

Having practised law for 19 years before becoming a priest, I am inclined to approach these problems from a legal position. I was taught and conducted my trial work as a lawyer on the rule of evi-

dence that if you could prove a witness falsified his testimony in one respect, you have a right to tell the jury that he is not to be believed in any respect. What these writers are saying is that St. Luke and St. Matthew are liars with regard to their testimony on the Virgin Birth of our Lord. How then, can they believe their testimony in other respects? How can they believe "The Sermon on the Mount" or bring themselves to follow it to the best of their ability as a teaching of our Lord?

. . . You cannot impeach one witness with the silence of another. The fact that St. Mark, St. John and St. Paul make no specific reference to the Virgin Birth as such would never be accepted as evidence to make St. Matthew and St. Luke out as liars. . . . How ridiculous can one get? WILLIAM K. REID  
St. James Episcopal Church  
Titusville, Pa.

I am a retired Methodist minister of the Peninsula Annual Conference. . . . I have the profoundest respect for an intellectual and scholarly interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, but when it becomes so rationalistic as to rule out the supernatural in the miracles of the New Testament, of which the Virgin Birth is historically factual and of signal import, I am constrained to raise my voice in protest.

The letters by Vernon T. Smith and John A. Hawkins are astutely worded in the vernacular of a modern liberalism in theology which would question not only the truth of the Virgin Birth, but any other of the miracles of the New Testament, and ruling out any possibility of a supernatural act of divinity. To my thinking, such rationalism is perilously destructive. . . . JOHN R. DIEHL  
Salisbury, Md.

I have the deepest respect and fondest admiration for Dr. Douglass, for, having seen the error of his earlier thinking, he changed his views on a very important doctrine. . . . Two of the comments on Dr. Douglass' article were by Presbyterians (U.S.A.) . . . expressing contempt for a cardinal doctrine of the Church to which they belong. In their ordination vows they were to have sincerely received and adopted the Confession of Faith of their Church, which contains the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures—the doctrine of the virgin birth not excepted. They were to have vowed also that the Scriptures were their infallible rule of faith and practice. . . . I'm sure this position is not generally held by all

Presbyterians, for which we are thankful, but still remain disturbed because those who err are not corrected or disciplined. . . . PAUL L. SALANSKY  
United Presbyterian Church  
Reinbeck, Iowa

Matthew 1:11 gives Jechonias (Coniah) as one of Joseph's ancestors. Read Jeremiah 22:24-30, especially the 29th and 30th verses. . . . If Joseph were the father of Jesus, then Jesus is not the Christ the Son of David. . . .  
Bradenton, Fla. STEPHEN F. BURTON

#### COUNTERBLAST TO WRATH

The enclosed sermon . . . is in a measure a counterblast to your "Jonathan Edwards' Still Angry God" (Jan. 6 issue) . . . Read particularly the marked passages . . . ("Jonathan Edwards believed in a . . . kind of god . . . quite foreign to the nature of Jesus. . . . The god he portrayed was as horrific in his spiritual features as the masked witch doctor of some primitive tribe is horrific in physical appearance. My God is a God of love. . . .") Please return the sermon after you have glanced through it; it is still unfinished as you may realize. . . .

Carman United Church RAY GOODALL  
Sardis, B. C.

I will have to take issue with you and Jonathan Edwards. . . . If we live in a dispensation of Grace, then it is one of love and not of anger. . . . The whole world of humanity was predestined to be saved. . . . It is doubtful if there are many hell-scared Christians. . . .  
Charleston, W. Va. J. R. M. KNAPP

The God pictured in the editorial is certainly Jonathan Edwards' God and not the Christian God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . MARCIUS E. TABER  
Pentwater Methodist Church  
Pentwater, Mich.

. . . A misapprehension of God's present economy of grace. . . . God the Father has "committed all judgment unto the Son." The Judge of all men throughout this dispensation of grace is their Saviour. This accounts for the long suffering of God in a day of exceeding sinfulness and extreme lawlessness. . . . Sir Robert Anderson has aptly stated in *Silence of God*, . . . all judicial and punitive action against human sin is in abeyance—deferred until the day of grace is over and the day of judgment dawns . . . a truth that will be sought for in vain in the standard theology of Christendom." Wheaton, Ill. ALEXANDER BALOG

Certainly God gets angry. He even hates sinners because of their sin. Are you suggesting, however, that this wrath of God is separate from and equal to his love? . . . that "God is wrath" or "God is hate" in the . . . same way as one says "God is love"? Is it not a God of love who consigns the lost to hell? . . .

Martin Luther referred to wrath as the "alien" nature of God, and love as the "essential" or "proper" nature of God. He was even able to call wrath one of the enemies which Christ "satisfied" by conquering in the atonement.

ARTHUR L. HANSON  
Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church  
East Grand Forks, Minn.

I want to commend your editorial on Jonathan Edwards. . . . It's surely needed now. . . .

Pasadena, Calif. LEON W. MOORE

I was very much pleased by the editorial "Jonathan Edwards' Still Angry God." The primary issue in the Church today is not the Deity of Jesus Christ, his bodily Resurrection, or his Virgin Birth, but the Pauline interpretation of the Cross. If, as evangelicals contend, Paul received this doctrine from the risen Lord (Gal. 1:11, 12), then there can be no thought of compromise. Christianity is sterile without the "expiatory and propitiatory significance" of Christ's death; the zeal of Paul in persecuting the early Church proves this thesis. When it becomes popular in the visible Church to reject the Pauline doctrine of the Atonement as pagan, then we may well wonder at the profound offense the Cross of Christ brings to the world. . . .

Harvard University TERENCE WILTING  
Cambridge, Mass.

#### MORNING MAIL

Thank you for a periodical that shys away from the stilted intellectualism of some others we could name and the ultra conservatives at the other end of the road. . . .

First Baptist Church HOWARD G. JUDAH  
Savannah, Mo.

Tremendous value lies in the fact that . . . you have done what fundamentalists have fought tooth and nail—introduced self-criticism. I believe that such a willingness to judge ourselves is not only basic to our making an impact on our contemporaries but it is indispensable for presenting ourselves worthily before the Lord. . . .

Gordon College LLOYD F. DEAN  
Beverly Farms, Mass.

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## MISSIONS DRAMA IN GHANA

The champions of ecumenism had no mean task when the Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council convened at year-end. Their objective was to get the delegates on record in favor of a proposal for merger with the World Council of Churches—a valuable promotional asset for achieving a final consummation of the plan. Whatever resolution the delegates voted on, therefore, would have to be just noncommittal enough to prevent wholesale opposition, a development which might work lasting damage to the ecumenical cause.

Significant personalities behind the ecumenical movement were on hand to guide the action. Among those who braved the blazing equatorial sun on the campus of the University College at Achimota were Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, General Secretary of the WCC; Dr. John A. Mackay, President of Princeton Theological Seminary, who was made honorary chairman of the IMC after serving 10 years as its chairman; Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, Chairman of the WCC Central Committee; Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen, President of Union Theological Seminary; Dr. Roswell P. Barnes, Executive Secretary for the WCC in the United States; and Dr. Charles W. Ranson, outgoing General Secretary of the IMC, who had to return suddenly to his London home because of his wife's death.

*An Ambiguous 'Yes' Resolution*

The Assembly voted 58 to 7 to adopt a "steering committee" report of 1,420 words as a representative statement. Tucked into the document as the first of its 10 resolutions was this significant sentence:

"Resolved: 1. The Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council, having reviewed the steady growth of the relationship of association between the IMC and the WCC and having considered with care the opinions of delegates, and those of the Christian Councils whose views have been presented, accepts in principle the integration of the two Councils and desires further steps to be taken toward this goal."

The language is sufficiently ambiguous so that delegates may be said, loosely speaking, to have voted for a merger. But there was no vote on straight acceptance or rejection of integration or on the draft plan for merger previously made public. The WCC is readying itself to exploit the Ghana development with bandwagon technique.

The vote on the resolutions was no accurate index to the atmosphere of the meeting. There were apprehensions and tensions, fears of American pressure and domination, and criticism of proceedings which Dr. Van Dusen conceded as "very indignant."

Integration proponents gained their large vote by (1) appealing to desires for unity, (2) phrasing resolutions carefully so as not to bind the delegates to specific action, (3) formally recognizing opposing viewpoints, (4) encouraging criticism, (5) promising further study, (6) allowing plenty of time, and (7) by stressing that the WCC and the IMC have been working together to a progressively greater extent all along so that a merger would not be as great a step as it might seem. Generous as these points appeared, numerous delegates insisted they represented no real concessions by ecumenical proponents. On the other hand, the WCC is now armed with the most powerful propaganda tool it has ever had in its drive to absorb the IMC.

*Three New Councils Added*

When the 12-day Ghana conclave began December 28, the IMC had 35 constituent councils. During the proceedings three new members were admitted: the National Councils of Ghana, Hong Kong and Northern Rhodesia. The IMC has strength because it has the support of old-line denominations which control the larger churches. Some evangelical groups have been associated with it since its organization in 1921.

Although the matter of integration was unmentioned until halfway through the Ghana Assembly, this one supreme concern overshadowed the sessions. From the outset a formidable bloc propagandized in favor of integration: the United States, Canada and Australia, where an elemental integration already exists, and all the churches of Asia except Korea. From this circle came almost ecstatic support for the plan in the two plenary sessions.

Backers of a merger say that the aim of the new WCC Commission formed out of the IMC would be to "further the effective proclamation to all men of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." Says the WCC-IMC Joint Committee: "The unity of the church and the mission of the church can no longer be separated."

The opposition stood its ground. In addition to Korea, the whole of Latin America represented in the Assembly (except the River Plate) was opposed; Congo Protestant Council, one of the oldest members of the IMC and one of the most vigorous councils in Africa, was opposed; observers from Nigeria, French West Africa and Kenya voiced opposition; Norway and Sweden were opposed, as were two speakers from Germany; and spokesmen for the British Evangelical Alliance and for the Church Missionary Society of London were opposed. Canon M. A. C. Warren, General Secretary of the CMS, opposed integration in the course of a careful examination of theological and practical aspects of the proposal, and voiced severe criticism of the handling of the plan.

"The divided church," he said, "has carried on a very effective mission, and there is no reason to think that an administrative act of this kind would make its mission endeavor more effective."

Concluded the Canon, "When the vote is taken, I hope that no doxology will be sung." He nevertheless voted for the resolutions "with regrets." He said the waste of manpower had gone too far, and failure to accept the plan would mean the resignation of officers of the IMC.

The introduction of the merger proposal was to have been handled by Ranson. But tragedy struck just 24 hours before the presentation. Ranson was notified of the death of his wife in a London automobile accident, whereupon he left immediately for England. The presentation thus fell upon President Mackay. His speech was followed by another from Dr. Fry as representative of the WCC, and one from President Van Dusen, chairman of the joint integration committee. The talks took about 40 minutes. Van Dusen later admitted that only the favorable side was presented, and it was this procedure with which Warren took issue in a plenary session the following day. Van Dusen believes the opposition thus got a fair deal in that the Canon took almost as long to criticize the plan as it took to present it.

It is significant that neither the draft nor the approved Ghana resolutions list the nature of the unfavorable aspects of merger. The negative view is recognized but not spelled out. There is no attempt to stack up the advantages and disadvantages side by side to see which side carries greater weight in principle.

Ecumenical leaders consider the absorption of the IMC essential, say opponents of the plan, and they appear willing to go to any extreme to see it through. They point out that the proponents of merger are not on record as having even answered objections. One approved resolution passed off criticism as stemming "in part from a misunderstanding of the WCC and ignorance of the already existing relations between the two organizations."

The "positive" wing of the churches is asserted to be after "more co-operation." Yet there is no consideration of co-operation already in effect among evangelical groups in IMC. These groups assertedly have long been the most aggressive and successful proclaimers of the Gospel, whose convictions are incompatible with theological inclusivism now represented by the WCC. But evangelicals at Ghana were unable to get their case on record in the face of the tide of ecumenism.

In approving the adoption of the resolutions, the Assembly agreed that the draft plan of integration "is a generally suitable instrument for integration." The plan was referred back to IMC constituent organizations for further study, comment and criticism, for amendment and further improvement.

One resolution asked the WCC to consider postponement of its 1960 Assembly at Ceylon for a year. Dr. Visser 't Hooft had already indicated his willingness to delay the Assembly. This was to follow for "further unhurried consideration."

Under the resolution timetable, comment from member organizations on the IMC plan is to be in the hands of the secretariat by April 30, 1959. The joint committee's final plan is to be sent to member organizations early in 1960 and is to include in draft form a constitution for the new unified body. Then the Administrative Committee or an Assembly of the IMC is to consider the constitution in 1960 or in the early part of 1961. If approved, it will go to the member councils and six months later the official action of the IMC is to be signified to the Joint Committee and to the WCC. The Ad-

## PEOPLE: WORDS AND EVENTS

**Clergymen Retiring**—Methodist *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam* said he will retire June 15, 1960. A successor to the former co-president of the World Council of Churches will be elected when the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference of the Methodist Church meets in Washington at the time of Oxnam's retirement. . . . *Dr. James Henry Hutchins*, who saw the Lake Avenue Congregational Church in Pasadena, California, grow in membership from 400 to 1,700 in his 37 years of ministry there, will retire at the end of 1958.

**"Dependence" Hit** — *Bishop David Chellappa* warned against "excessive

dependence on overseas support" in a talk to the biennial synod of the Church of South India.

**Theological Dictionary**—*Dr. Everett F. Harrison*, Professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary, is guiding the publication of a new Dictionary of Theology as its editor-in-chief. *Dr. Geoffrey W. Bromiley*, Episcopal pastor in Scotland and a contributing editor to **CHRISTIANITY TODAY**, is an associate editor. Contributors to the dictionary scheduled for 1959 publication include *W. F. Albright, G. C. Berkouwer, F. F. Bruce, Gordon Clark, Oscar Cullman and R. V. G. Tasker*.

ministrative Committee was given power to reconvene the IMC Assembly if required.

The assembly at Ghana was historic, said some critics, as a pattern for "the most expeditious way of promoting ecumenical amalgamation."

"There was little in the way of an obvious meeting of minds, much less a blending of hearts in prayer," said one observer. "The Lord God was not mentioned in the adopted report. Neither was the Bible, nor any expressed desire to seek the will of the Lord."

Partisans of the merger were confident, however, that a majority vote can be anticipated when the integration issue is faced in final form.

(Most estimates place IMC missionary strength between 12,000 and 15,000. The Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association and the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association together represent more than 10,000 missionaries.)

Evangelical spokesmen felt that their opportunity for constructive and positive appraisal and criticism of the plan must now be centered within the constituent members of the IMC.

*George S. Constance*, Area Secretary for the Christian and Missionary Alliance in South America, Africa, and the Middle East, said that a merger would trigger the formation of more independent evangelical councils in various mission fields.

*Dr. Clyde W. Taylor*, Executive Secretary of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association, said that in face of the merger evangelicals "probably will strive to withdraw their councils from the IMC and thus maintain a united front." Tay-

lor added that "where this is not possible, the natural course of action will be withdrawal and the establishment of evangelical fellowships where these do not already exist."

*Dr. Everett L. Cattell*, former secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of India, takes this view: "My deep fear is that the effort to educate these churches in which missions are peripheral, to their duty to make them central, by the mere organizational device of merging the IMC with the WCC, will actually result in moving missions still further from the center."

"If vigorous missionary societies functioning in the congregations of these denominations for a century have not been able to put missions central in the structure of their churches, does anyone seriously believe that it can be done better from Geneva by plotting a blueprint whose intricacy approaches that of the tax structure of the United States?"

"The fallacy involved in this move is the old one of assuming that spiritual deficiencies can be made up by organizational change. In India it has been thoroughly demonstrated that making over authority to nationals and integrating missions into churches, good and right as such moves may be, has in no case supplied spiritual life when it was deficient. There is little hope that doing a wrong thing in a bigger and better way will be any more successful."

[Next issue: **CHRISTIANITY TODAY** reports on \$4,000,000 in grants to the IMC for ecumenical theological training of nationals, a move unprecedented in the history of missions.]

## Scholars' Society

A firm if not a spectacular contribution to current evangelical vitality may be credited to more than 275 Bible scholars from some 75 faculties who make up the Evangelical Theological Society.

As it has done annually since its inception in 1949, the society named a new president for 1958: *Dr. Warren C. Young*, Professor of Philosophy of Religion at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary. Young succeeds *Dr. Ned B. Stonehouse*, Professor of New Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary, who in leaving office restated the society's outlook.

Its purpose as set forth by Stonehouse is "to foster conservative biblical scholarship by providing for the oral exchange and written expression of thought and research in the general field of the theological disciplines as centered in the Scriptures."

Can the society exert a theological impact?

Most assuredly, according to Stonehouse, despite the fact that "its purpose is not to make propaganda for the Christian faith" and therefore "its proceedings do not attract much attention even from the Christian public."

He said the group's activity "consists largely in the exchange of ideas at periodic conferences" which have the potential to nourish "the most fruitful scholarly labors."

"The Evangelical Theological Society came into being," he said, "because of the conviction that (other societies), because of their doctrinal inclusiveness, could not fulfill the widely felt need for a fellowship of conservative scholars."

Weary of negative and critical approaches to the Bible, the society's founders unequivocally committed themselves to the Bible as Word of God in the formulation of a doctrinal basis definition.

They confined it to one article:

"The Bible alone and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written, and therefore inerrant in the autographs."

Stonehouse said creeds of more than one article "characteristically lack precision," and "because of their fragmentary character, they fail to reflect the unity of biblical truth."

He also expressed awareness of three "dangers attendant upon the formulation of beliefs solely in terms of the inspiration of the Scripture."

Here, according to Stonehouse, are the dangers and how they are being faced:

(1) "That this doctrine might be held in doctrinaire fashion.

## Pulpit Potpourri

Church World Service, a relief agency of the National Council of Churches in the United States, advanced \$100,000 to the United Nations Refugee Fund to help resettle more than 20,000 White Russians stranded in Communist China since the Red Revolution 40 years ago. . . .

An appeal court in Ontario ruled that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation must stand trial on charges of violating the Lord's Day Act of Canada. The CBC planned a higher appeal. . . .

Drafts were completed for documents intended to unite the American Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church. . . .

The International Reformed Congress will meet in Strasbourg, France, July 22-30. . . . The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) now has a world membership of 192,820. . . .

The Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, began regular telecasting of its Sunday morning worship services. . . . Central Airlines inaugurated a new half-fare clergy travel plan. The line serves 30 cities in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas and Colorado.

The Methodist Board of Education allocated \$1,000,000 to the denomination's ten theological seminaries. . . . Evangelist *Monroe Parker* took over the presidency of Pillsbury Conservative Baptist Bible College in Owatonna, Minnesota. . . .

Harvard University Press is offering \$3,000 to the author of the best book manuscript on the history of religion submitted during the next four years. . . . The National Lutheran Education Conference voted to establish a national office in Washington.

The International Society of Christian Endeavor marked its 77th anniversary with a Youth Week observance in cooperation with the United Christian Youth Movement. . . .

In a 600-word statement, educators attending the 44th annual convention of the Association of American Colleges in Miami believed they had the first Protestant-Catholic agreement on general policy in education in 400 years. The basis of agreement: "Church-related colleges upon which Christian higher education depends must be maintained at all costs."

"This danger can be avoided only if we recognize that our doctrine of Scripture is an aspect of our doctrine of God and that to acknowledge Scripture as infallible is to acknowledge the absolute supremacy of the God of the Covenant in the sphere of truth."

(2) "That we shall conceive of infallibility in an abstract manner in dealing, for example, with such matters as the harmony of the Gospels and quotations of the Old Testament in the New and thus shall draw inferences from the affirmation of infallibility, or apply this doctrine in such a way as actually to do violence to the total witness of Scripture."

"There ought to be a constant concern, therefore, to reflect upon the testimony of the whole of Scripture to its own character."

(3) "That in concentrating attention upon the doctrine of Scripture we shall relegate to a position of subordination the message of the Bible as a whole including in particular the doctrine of redemption."

"Our very commitment to the *Sola Scriptura* doctrine must constrain us to press forward to lay hold with all our powers on the whole counsel of God in order that all our thoughts and ways may come under His control."

## Schools and Government

Tax-writing United States Congressmen heard a new bid for legislation which would give income tax relief to parents who send their children to Christian schools.

Legislation sponsored by *Representative Gerald R. Ford, Jr.*, a Michigan Republican, would make legal deductions of tuition payments to schools which are non-parochial but nevertheless conducted "on a religious basis."

There are some 350 such elementary and elementary and secondary schools in the United States joined by two organizations: the National Union of Christian Schools and the National Association of Christian Schools. Evangelical convictions are their common ground, although neither has any direct affiliation with churches.

*John A. Vander Ark*, director of the National Union, represented both groups in a statement before the House Ways and Means Committee, which drafts tax legislation.

Vander Ark said tuition rates at schools he represented "are, in effect, suggested minimum contributions for parents."

"Pupils," he said, "are not barred because of non-payment of tuition."

Viewing the tuition payments as contributions, Vander Ark said the tax law

thus reveals an inequity between these non-parochial "Christian parental" schools and parochial schools. In the case of the latter, payments by parents for the schooling of the children can be channeled through churches which directly support the schools. Such payments are unquestionably deductible.

There were those who saw an inequity, but who nevertheless had qualms about the bill. Notable opposition can be expected from the organization of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State, which fears that should it become law, the measure might be invoked later as a precedent for partisan programs.

#### Greater than Ever

Construction of churches and synagogues in the United States set a new record in 1957, the government reported.

The value of new church buildings constructed last year was estimated at \$868,000,000, topping the previous all-time high of 1956 by \$100,000,000.

A new record also was established in the building of private hospitals, homes for the aged and other institutions, many of which are church-related.

Private school construction, however, was down three per cent.

#### Obscene Literature

The Post Office Department classified three magazines as obscene. So did a string of lower courts. The United States Supreme Court said no. Result: Mailing bans against the magazines were lifted.

The high court decision (unanimously delivered, but without written opinions) did not deter other efforts:

Postal authorities will continue to deny mailing privileges to magazines which exploit obscenity, said Abe McGregor Goff, general counsel.

The House Judiciary Committee scheduled public hearings on legislation designed to increase penalties for mailing obscene matter.

The International Society of Christian Endeavor urged local affiliates to support any such legislation.

#### Obituaries

Dr. Frank C. Phillips, Executive Secretary of World Vision, Inc., died after a heart attack in Los Angeles.

The Rev. John C. O'Hair, pastor of the North Shore Baptist Church in Chicago, died after a heart attack.

Dr. P. B. Fitzwater, Professor of Theology and New Testament at Moody Bible Institute for 41 years, died of injuries suffered when struck by a car.

## LATIN AMERICA

### Off to the Islands

Evangelist Billy Graham shook off effects of a flu attack and began a Caribbean campaign with meetings on the islands of Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Barbados and Trinidad.

The aid of associate evangelists, including Spanish-speaking clergymen traveling with the team, enabled overlapping schedules in Graham's nine crusades. Meetings in Panama were to be underway this week, with rallies in Costa Rica,

Guatemala and Mexico to follow.

Graham was enthusiastic over early reports of favorable reaction. His Caribbean evangelistic thrust follows on the heels of unprecedented evangelical cooperation in the South American crusade of Dr. Oswald J. Smith, whose eight city campaigns in the last four months of 1957 resulted in some 4,500 first-time decisions for salvation.

Graham said the response in Smith's meetings indicated "a world-wide move of the Holy Spirit."

Before leaving for the Caribbean, the evangelist visited Charlotte, North Caro-

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## Meet Nelson Edman

Mrs. Billy Graham presented her evangelist husband with the couple's fifth child, the second boy, in an Asheville, North Carolina hospital.

The baby was named Nelson Edman in honor of Mrs. Graham's father, Dr. L. Nelson Bell, Executive Editor of CHRISTIANITY TODAY and Dr. V. Raymond Edman, president of the Grahams' alma mater, Wheaton College.

Nelson Edman arrived just several days before Graham was to leave for the Caribbean. Only once previously had the 39-year-old evangelist been with his wife when she gave birth.

after a cabinet reshuffle which saw the replacement of the police chief. One of the imprisoned priests was Msgr. Jesus Hernandez-Chappellin, editor of the Catholic daily *La Religion*, generally regarded as critical of the Perez Jimenez regime.

## AFRICA

### A Gift of Souls

When the Kagoro Christians learned that the Rev. and Mrs. Tom Archibald were leaving Nigeria for their ninth furlough, they decided that a collection of \$300 was hardly enough to pay due respect to a Scottish missionary couple who had worked for 37 years among head hunters and cannibals.

Why not conduct a special evangelistic crusade aiming to reach every last individual with the message of salvation?

The dark-skinned Kagoro tribesmen responded first with a revival among their own church people. Prayer meetings drew overflow crowds before dawn, then a witnessing campaign followed. Two by two they went out for Christ, these same people who 30 years before had lived and worshipped in the blood of others.

Now the Archibalds were leaving. Thousands of the dark-skinned people swarmed onto a football field cut out of the jungle. Kagoro Pastor Adamu rose to present the gift. He only gestured. On the field were 3,533 new Christians, the fruit of the three-week evangelistic effort in honor of the missionary couple.

## EUROPE

### Their Irish Up?

Three ministers and a layman aired their views on mass evangelism over the facilities of the Northern Ireland Broadcasting Service.

The Rev. W. M. Craig listened quietly while a fellow panel member likened the big campaign with its emotions to a "brain-washing technique."

Then Craig stepped to the microphone and reminded the accuser that emotion is an integral part of human personality, and that when a soul passed from death unto life there is bound to be emotion.

"Some aspects may not please all," he said, "but the church cannot cast the first stone."

Craig declared that the past campaigns in the North of Ireland had given the church "some wonderful leaders," and that he did not consider them "over-evangelized."

S.W.M.

## Bible Text of the Month

*The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29).*

¶ When our Lord was thus set forth by John, it is well to note the special character under which he was declared. John knew much of the Lord Jesus, and could have pictured him in many lights and characters. He might have especially pointed him out as the great moral Example, the Founder of a higher form of life, the great Teacher of holiness and love. Yet this did not strike the Baptist as the head and front of our Lord's character, but he proclaimed him as One who had come into the world to be the great Sacrifice for Sin. C. H. SPURGEON

¶ The principle office of Christ is briefly but clearly stated: that he takes away the sins of the world by the sacrifice of his death, and reconciles men to God. There are other favours, indeed, which Christ bestows upon us, but this is the chief favour, and the rest depend on it; that, by appeasing the wrath of God, he makes us to be reckoned holy and righteous. For from this source flow all the streams of blessings, that, by not imputing our sins, he receives us into favour. Accordingly, John in order to conduct us to Christ, commences with the gratuitous forgiveness of sins which we obtain through Him. JOHN CALVIN

### LAMB OF GOD

¶ The article denotes the appointed Lamb of God, which, according to the prophetic utterance presupposed as well known, was expected in the person of the Messiah. This characteristic form of Messianic expectation is based upon Isa. 53. Comp. Matt. 8:17; Luke 22:37; Acts 8:32; I Pet. 2:22 ff.; and the *Lamb in the Apocalypse*. H. A. W. MEYER

¶ As the lamb was sacrificed upon the altar, as a symbolical atonement for the sins of the people, this epithet is applied figuratively to our Lord Jesus Christ, to denote the sacrifice which he made for the sins of men. That John so intended the expression to be understood, is evident from the words which follow, *which taketh away*. This shows that Jesus was not called a *lamb*, to denote merely that he was an innocent and harmless man, or from any analogy existing between him and the paschal lamb, which was the sign of deliverance from Egyptian bondage; nor was he thus called, with any reference to the lamb of the daily evening and morning sacrifice, for this

was only one of the several animals which were offered on such occasion. . . . Christ was indeed typified in the paschal lamb and in all the sacrificial ritual, but the *Lamb of God* is here used in a higher and more significant sense, as the Lamb previously referred to in the Messianic prophecies. JOHN J. OWEN

¶ It is a testimony that stands as a heading to the whole series or class of similar sayings which represents the Lord Jesus as bearing our sins in His own body. . . . The identification of the Lamb of God with Jesus of Nazareth was the only thing in this testimony of the Baptist specifically new; and He is called the *Lamb of God*, just as He is styled "the Bread of God" (John 6:33), partly because He was graciously provided by God, partly because He was the truth of the types, or the reality of what was foreshadowed by the Lamb in the old economy; or, it may be, the Lamb that belongs to God—that is, which is to be offered as a sacrifice to Him.

GEORGE SMEATON

### TAKETH AWAY

¶ He is said to be "the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world; not *hath taken*, or *will take*, but *taketh*, which notes, *actum perpetuum*, the constant effect of his death. STEPHEN CHARNOCK

¶ The verb rendered *taketh away*, refers to the removal of sin or its penalty, by an atonement or expiation. It is the word chosen by the LXX to translate *pardon* (i.e. put away) *my sin*, in I Sam. 15:25, and to bear the iniquity, in Lev. 10:17. How could the sin of the world be revoked in any other manner? Could it be effected by the death of a merely good man? Surely not. Strict and perfect obedience is required of every created intelligence, and no one therefore, however good he may be, has any stock of merit which can be transferred to the account of another. But a suitable expiation has been made, and Jesus Christ, who a little before was averred to be the Incarnate Word, who in the beginning was with God, and who was God, and by whom all things were created, is here declared to be the Being, through whose blood shed like that of the lamb upon the altar, the expiation has been effected. JOHN J. OWEN

¶ The full meaning of the expression,

*o airon*, is scarcely brought out in our authorized translation. The Greek verb, *airo*, like its Hebrew equivalent *nasa*, primarily signifies "to lift up"; and, secondarily, "to carry away," as one lifts up a burden, and then removes it to another place. No doubt it may be translated "to take away"; but it strictly means to take away in one particular manner—namely, by bearing or carrying the thing that is taken away. As used in this passage it is highly significant, implying that Christ took upon himself the burden of our sin, and in this way removed it from us. The expression, indeed, as thus applied, is figurative. But it is not on that account to be stripped of its obvious meaning.

THOMAS J. CRAWFORD

### SIN OF THE WORLD

¶ Here is no ground at all for universal redemption; for the word *world*, standeth here in opposition to the Jews, as this very evangelist himself explaineth it (I John 2:2): "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only (of the Jewish nation) but also for the sins of the whole world"; and of men of other nations; and so he meaneth here—that "Christ is the Lamb of God, a sacrifice, not for the Jews only, but for the Gentiles, and other nations also."

JOHN LIGHTFOOT

¶ And when he says, the sin of the world, he extends this favour indiscriminately to the whole human race; that the Jews might not think that he had been sent to them alone. But hence we infer that the whole world is involved in the same condemnation; and that as all men without exception are guilty of unrighteousness before God, they need to be reconciled to him. John the Baptist, therefore, by speaking generally of the sin of the world, intended to impress upon us the conviction of our own misery, and to exhort us to seek the remedy. Now our duty is, to embrace the benefit which is offered to all, that each of us may be convinced that there is nothing to hinder him from obtaining reconciliation in Christ, provided that he comes to him by the guidance of faith.

JOHN CALVIN

¶ Like most of the terms for sin, this term, too, is negative, "missing the mark," i.e., the one set by the divine law, missing it by thought, word, or deed, by our very condition which is corrupt by nature. As many men as there have been, are now, and will be in the world, each with his daily life stained with many sins, so many individual masses of sin are formed, and all these masses are combined in one (Cont'd on page 39)

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## Books in Review

### BARTH'S VIEW OF MAN

*Christ and Adam, Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, by Karl Barth, Harper, 1957. 96 pp., \$2.00.

In his introduction to this book of Karl Barth, Dr. Wilhelm Pauck asserts that Barth's doctrine of man as expressed in his view of the relation of Adam to Christ involves "a reinterpretation of traditional theological anthropology" (p. 12).

Pauck's estimate is true to the facts. For the "parallel between Adam and Christ" of orthodox theology, Barth wants to substitute the parallel between Christ and Adam" (p. 16). "The relation between Adam and us reveals not the primary but only the secondary anthropological truth and ordering principle. . . . Man's essential and original nature is to be found, therefore, not in Adam but in Christ. In Adam we can only find it prefigured. Adam can therefore be interpreted only in the light of Christ and not the other way round" (p. 29).

While Barth, then, holds to a formal parallelism between Adam and Christ, his chief aim is to indicate the "essential priority" and "inner superiority" that would make Christ the master of Adam" rather than Adam the master of Christ (p. 32).

This "material relationship" between Christ and Adam means "that sin is subordinate to grace, and that it is grace that has the last word about the true nature of man" (p. 43). Thus "the history of humanity is the history of God's covenant with man" (p. 61). "Jesus Christ is the secret truth about the essential nature of man, and even sinful man is still essentially related to Him. That is what we have learned from Rom. 5:12-21" (p. 86).

The radical character of Barth's "reinterpretation" of the relation of Christ and Adam may be seen even more clearly in his *Church Dogmatics* (*Kirchliche Dogmatik*) especially in his doctrine of the atonement. For there it appears that if we are to have the new doctrine of man that Barth wants us to have we must first have his new doctrine of Christ.

Thus the Chalcedon creed is said to be greatly in need of reinterpretation (op. cit., IV:2, p. 6). There must be no static separation between the divine and the human natures of Christ. Christ is what he does. And what he does he has

always done. The humanity of Christ is inherently integral with his divinity (ibid., p. 37).

Again, inherent in this new doctrine of Christ there is a new doctrine of God. According to Barth, God's being is identical with his revelation in Christ. God does not change when he goes into estrangement in his Son (ibid., p. 29). The entire old Christology "suffered from the pride of man who makes God in his own image" (ibid., p. 92). Its doctrine of the unchangeability of God kept it from realizing that God's being is inherently being for man.

Only if we understand that God's being is inherently being for man can we also understand that man's being is inherently being for God. Since God's being is being in grace to man, it follows that man's being is that of the receiver of grace from God. Thus God's humiliation in Christ is at the same time man's exaltation in Christ. "The act of humiliation of the Son of God is as such the elevation of the Son of man and in him of human nature" (ibid., p. 111).

It is only if we have thus substituted the idea of the freedom of God by which it is his nature to turn into the opposite of himself for the orthodox view of the immutability of God that we can "actualize" the incarnation (ibid., p. 118) and therewith have a Christ in terms of whom we can interpret human nature (Adam) truly.

Then Adam is put in his proper place. The "anonymous of the Genesis saga" (IV:1, p. 572) then appears to be a shadow image of Christ. We misunderstand the Genesis account of the creation of Adam and of his fall altogether if we take it to be history (ibid., p. 566). The original man was as such the original sinner (ibid., p. 567). Only if we drop the idea of the historicity of the Genesis narrative can we say that Christ is the first and real Adam (ibid., p. 572). What is more, and basic to all, it is only if we stop thinking of the person and work of Jesus Christ as historical and lift him into the realm of *Geschichte* that he can be the Saviour of mankind (ibid., p. 814). The steps of the humiliation and of the exaltation of Christ do not follow one another. The humiliation and the exaltation of Jesus Christ are two supplementary aspects of one another (ibid., p. 145). If we are to have the real, the first and last Adam, the man in

terms of whom alone human nature itself is to be defined, then we must think of him as moving in *Geschichte* rather than in "Historie" (*ibid.*, p. 370).

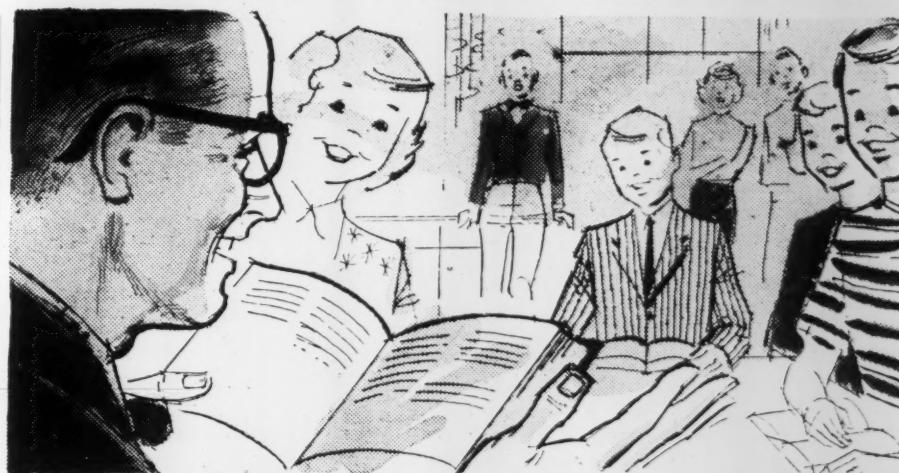
What Barth means by *Geschichte* as over against "Historie" is difficult to say. He tells us that it is the realm where our ordinary understanding of space and time has no application (*ibid.*). *Geschichte* has a space and time of its own. There is real happening there (*ibid.*, pp. 371, 373). We are to have no parthenogenesis of the faith. The apostles faced the *fact* of the resurrection. They saw, they heard, they felt him (*ibid.*, p. 377). For all that it remains true for Barth that by means of the category of ordinary history we cannot understand the death and resurrection of Christ (*ibid.*, p. 370). For him "*Geschichte*" overlaps and in some measure enters into "Historie" but always with the understanding the fully real transaction between God and man takes place in *Geschichte*, not in "Historie."

It is in *Geschichte* rather than in "Historie" that Barth looks for the objectivity that he seeks on the one hand over against Bultmann and on the other hand over against orthodoxy. And his "universalism" is immediately involved in this objectivity. The love of God in Christ is for Barth by definition love for all men. In failing to see that God's love is by definition love for all men he never had a true view of the depth of God's love at all (*ibid.*, p. 589).

If, then, we are to avoid the fatal parallelism of Adam and Christ and instead have the true superiority of Christ over Adam, the process of reinterpretation of "Chalcedon" must lead on to the reinterpretation of the orthodox doctrines of God, of the fall, and of the life and death of Jesus Christ so as to take all of them out of history into the one Christ-Event which is *Geschichte*. Then it can be seen that the sin of Adam, of mankind, is "real," but only as already overcome in Christ. The "normalization of our nature" as men has taken place in Christ before our birth. To be men, really men, men must be in Christ. And all men are men since they are all in Christ.

There remains one qualification. Judas Iscariot, a son of Adam, stands "for the open situation in preaching," for the idea that determinism has its correlative in indeterminism. But this "nominalist" aspect in Barth's thinking, though still active, is now overshadowed by his "realist" emphasis.

Historic Christianity would be destroyed by either emphasis. For in Barth's



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view, God does not confront man in ordinary history. Man does not know and break the law and break it in history, and no atonement is made for him directly in history.

C. VAN TIL

### GUIDANCE IN BUILDING

*Building The New Church*, by William S. Clark, Religious Publishing Co., Jenkintown, Pa., 1957. \$2.25 (paper \$1.25).

When a new church is planned, the minister and building committee usually find themselves in need of guidance in their task. This little work is simply a handbook which will help to solve many of the problems they meet.

Every aspect of the building campaign is simply and succinctly dealt with in these pages. From "The Initial Preparation," all the way through the process—the work of committees, meeting conflicting opinions in the congregation, choosing an architect, raising funds, materials of construction, art in the church, to "Dedication and Occupancy," this book provides a guide.

The treatment is brief, perhaps too brief, but the bibliography points the way to further information. Like any other work on the subject, it serves to emphasize the fact that every minister should acquire a working knowledge of church architecture, to which this is but a short but highly useful introduction.

ARNOLD A. DALLIMORE

### SCRIPTURAL VALIDITY

*Thy Word Is Truth*, by Edward J. Young, Eerdmans, 1957. 287 pp., \$3.50.

It is a pleasure to recommend this popular yet thorough book upholding the full truthfulness of the Bible. Dr. Edward J. Young knows the Bible and believes it. His other books on the Old Testament show his thorough familiarity with the critical attacks of our day. His defense is the more encouraging.

He develops a definition of inspiration—verbal inspiration—from the Scriptures themselves. He grounds the authority of the Word upon the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit. He also gives Christ's attitude toward Scripture and shows that disbelief in it involves distrust of him.

In his section discussing inerrancy, he shows that this is the Church's historic doctrine, and considers a number of the usually alleged inconsistencies, giving adequate answers to them. The reviewer would question the author's treatment of the details of some of these problem passages, but in any case Dr. Young has established his main thesis that the Bible

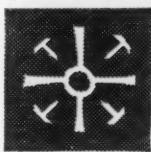
in these places has no insoluble difficulty. The last part of the book is somewhat different. In Chapter 8 he adopts, largely, the apologetical viewpoint of Van Til. He accepts the charge that Bible believers reason in a circle (p. 192), and says that "If one begins with the presuppositions of unbelief, he will end with unbelief's conclusions" (p. 191). The reviewer would like to differ with the author here. The fact is that the apostles did not forbear to argue nor did they use circular reasoning. They appealed to facts of observation declaring that these should convince the doubting, and doubters were saved by the thousands. They established the validity of the claims of Christ by a witness to historical facts. After that, the authority of Christ was sufficient for all matters. This is not circular reasoning; it is reliance upon valid historical testimony. And it has been used to convince doubters down through the ages. Numerous famous men have begun to write books against the Bible using wrong presuppositions only to have the redemptive facts used of the Spirit to convert them and cause them to change their views. We should add, however, that this chapter is an able and readable statement of the author's position.

The last section is a much needed analysis of some modern denials of the Bible. The ideas concerning Scripture of O. Piper, G. Ernest Wright and John Mackay of this country, Alan Richardson and H. L. Ellison of England, and Brunner and Barth of the Continent are briefly but effectively analyzed and shown to be quite erroneous. This section is enough to commend the book to orthodox readers. The reviewer hopes that it will be widely used and that many may profit from it. R. LAIRD HARRIS

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J. MARCELLUS KIK

### THE GARDEN STORY

*Billy Graham and the New York Crusade*, by George Burnham and Lee Fisher, Zondervan, 1957. \$2.50. An experienced journalist has the perspicuity in observing the facts to sift the irrelevant from the important; and also has the perspective to realize the significance of the facts. In excellent journalistic style George Burnham and Lee Fisher tell the story of Manhattan's 1957 miracle.

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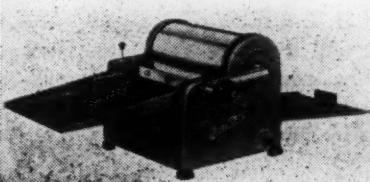
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## A LAYMAN AND HIS FAITH

(Cont'd from p. 19) tinue to spew out the golden calves of licentiousness and violence, and parents can no more evade responsibility than did Aaron with his puerile remark.

¶ Finally, we would suggest a deterrent to juvenile delinquency that is an almost forgotten art in contemporary American life—a *good sound thrashing*. In the book of Proverbs we read: "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." Even among child psychologists there are now some who agree there is nothing more calculated to clear the atmosphere in a child's thinking and reactions. The Bible is expressing true child psychology when it says: "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." In a day when the only switches in the average American home are those that turn on or off the current in an electric gadget, it would be wise to procure some that grow on trees and are to be had for the cutting.

In addition, serious consideration

should be given to laws that will permit the whipping of juvenile delinquents by duly constituted and supervised officers of the law. One of the reasons for present delinquency is that it has been glamorized. A culprit when seized loves the publicity, wants newspaper space and becomes a hero in the eyes of his associates. Nothing will prick this bubble of conceit and wrong values more than a thorough thrashing. Harsh? No. It is eminently worth trying.

L. NELSON BELL

## TEXT OF THE MONTH

(Cont'd from page 33) supermass, "The sin of the world." We may unfold this collective by taking the law and dwelling on all the many kinds, types, forms, and effects of sin. Again we may set forth the deadly, damning power of a single sin, and then multiply this power a million fold and again a million fold. Yet we should not make the rather specious—merely abstract—distinction between the "sin" itself and the "guilt" of sin, for sin exists nowhere apart from its guilt, and guilt nowhere apart from its sin. The same is true with regard to "sin" and

its "consequences." As the guilt inheres in the sin, so the consequences stick to the sin, closer than a shadow. Neither the guilt nor the consequences are taken away, really taken away, unless the sin itself is taken away. With the sin also its guilt and consequences are cancelled.

R. C. H. LENSKI

¶ Men are willing to accept Christ as most anything except as Saviour; but Christ is not willing to be accepted as anything less than a Saviour. He is a Priest that he may offer sacrifice for a lost race; he is a Teacher that he may teach men the way of salvation; and he is a King in a kingdom of saved souls. If we will not accept him as the Lamb of God, we have no part with him. The Jews were ready to accept him as a political Reformer, but he refused such an office. Many nowadays are ready to accept him as the Leader of all sorts of social reforms, but they and all men must take him as their Saviour or not at all.

W. A. CANDLER

¶ There are only two places where sin can be—either it is with thee, to lie upon thy neck, or it lies on Christ, the Lamb of God. If it lies on thy shoulders, thou art lost; but if it rests on Christ, thou art quit of it, and art saved. MARTIN LUTHER

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